

The
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN
RANGERS**

**Southern Alberta's Cowboy Cavalry in the
North West Rebellion - 1885**

by
Gordon E. Tolton



Occasional Paper No. 28

LETHBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O.Box 974

Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada T1J 4A2

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by
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Cover: Illustrations / Front We retouched a portion of an illustration which first appeared in the Canadian Illustrated War News in July of 1885. This illustration accompanied an article which had been submitted to the News by John Higinbotham who was an early southern Alberta druggist. A photograph of the illustration was obtained from the Glenbow Archives NA-1353-24, Calgary, Alberta. This photograph was first photocopied, then retouched by Carlton R. Stewart by physically deleting much of the background, then strengthening some of the weaker detail lines by means of pencil and ink pens. The complete photograph is shown, and a portion of Higinbotham's article appears on page 1.

Back Glenbow Archives NA-1353-23 Woodcut of Duncan J. Campbell former Bank of Montreal employee and Fort Macleod businessman, as he appeared in April 1885 while serving as Adjutant of the Rocky Mountain Ranger.

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The tale of the life and times of the Rocky Mountain Rangers is one that has been far too long in coming. In researching I have been amazed at the lore and the family histories of the individual Rangers that exists. Yet for some reason, their time in service during the North West Rebellion is barely covered. Perhaps that is how Major John Stewart and the others saw their military time, as merely a small chapter in their own full lives. Maybe their families just forgot to ask. Perhaps it's time someone did. My research and writing of this book has been exhilarating and sometimes frustrating, but I have tried to do the best I could with the information that exists.

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Members of the Lethbridge Historical Society; President George Kush, who provided me access to his vast military and historical collections, candid opinions, and his total backing of this project. Any historical researcher would be proud to have a friend like George in their corner. The Society as a whole has been tremendously supportive and has provided me with a forum for my interests. The Society Book Publishing Committee gave their full consideration to my manuscript, and has been more than patient with deadlines, delays and demands. Members - Irma Dogterom, Ralph Erdman, William (Bill) Lingard, Greg Ellis, and Carlton R. (Carly) Stewart in particular should be thanked for his time to oversee this project and to make all the pieces fit in coordinating the publication's design and layout.

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In the course of writing this text, I have been able to utilize several sources, such as family remembrance from local history compilations, archival sources, photographs, and secondary source publications. It has been a challenge to gather as much information as I have, and I feel that there is so much more "out there" that has not been touched. I no doubt have left somebody's ancestor out of this text, and that is merely due to the time and resources I could allow myself. If I have left anyone or anything out, I would appreciate being contacted, through the Lethbridge Historical Society, as I plan to continue this research.

Introduction

Who were the Rocky Mountain Rangers?

On June 20, 1885 an Eastern Canadian newspaper, the *Canadian Pictorial and Illustrated War News*, reported the presence of a very colourful brigade in glowing terms.

Headed by their youthful but intrepid commander, Capt. Stewart, the Rocky Mountain Rangers presented quite a formidable appearance as they left McLeod, amid the loud huzzas of the garrison. Their tanned faces almost hidden beneath the brims of huge Spanish sombreros, strapped on for grim death. Around many of their necks were silk handkerchiefs which besides being an embellishment,

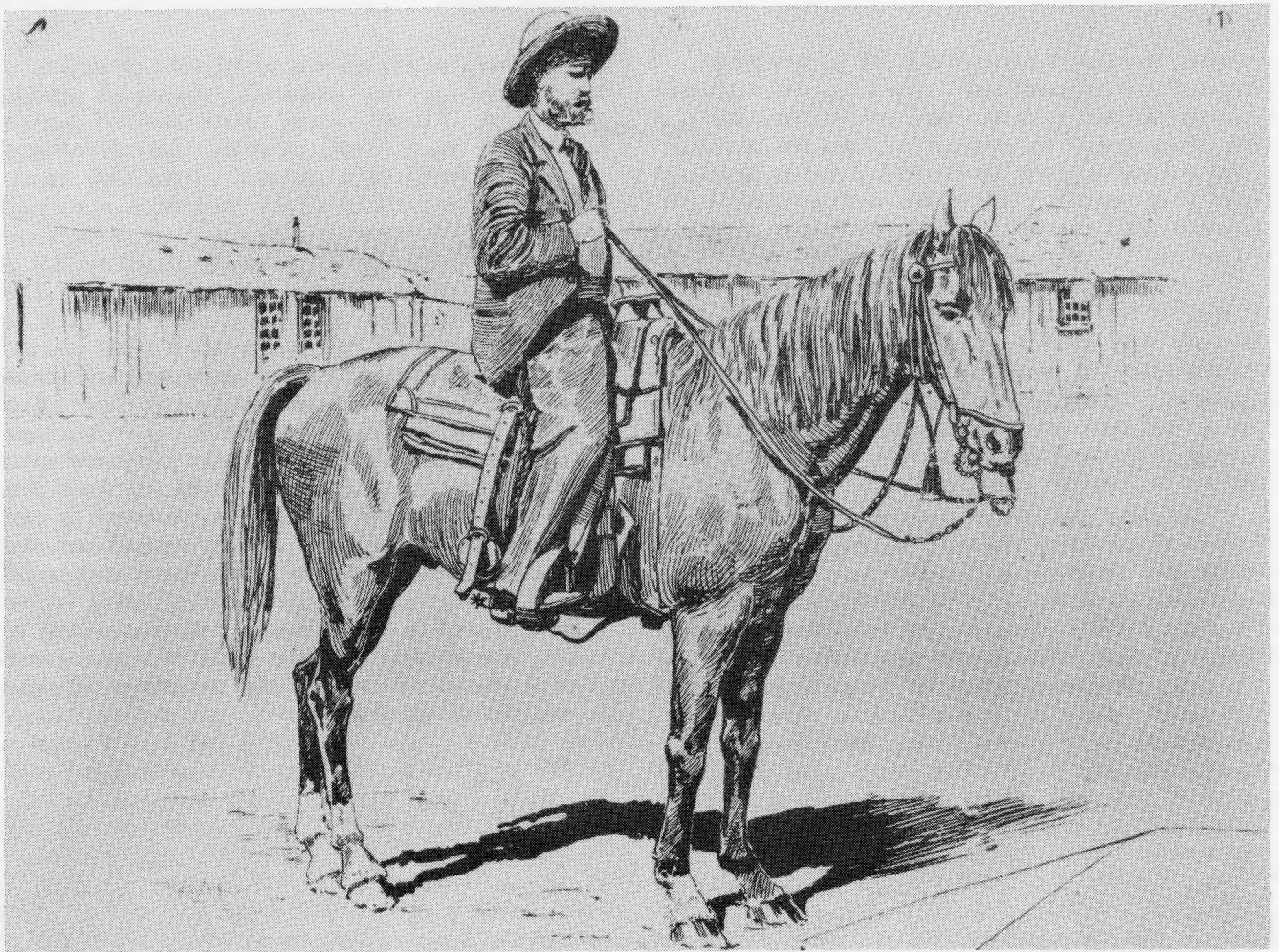
prevented the irritation by their coarse brown duck or 'Montana' broadcloth coats. Over pants of the same material were drawn a pair of chaps (leather overalls). Cross belts pregnant with cartridges a 'sixshooter', sheath knife, a Winchester slung across the pommel of the saddle and a coiled lariat completed the belligerent outfit. Mounted on 'bronchoes' good for 60 to 100 miles a day, they soon disappeared in the distance, a loud clanking of bits and jingling of their huge Mexican spurs now gave place to the rattling of the transportation wagons.



In July 1885, John Higinbotham's article in the *Canadian Illustrated War News* on the Rocky Mountain Rangers was accompanied by this illustration: 'The Cowboy Cavalry' by J. D. White, proprietor of the Rockies Paint Shop in Calgary. If White intended this to depict the Rangers, it is truly a curiosity. White included his Stephen Avenue store into the left-hand side of the illustration, however the Rangers as a unit

were never in Calgary. Whether he intended the town to be Calgary or Fort Macleod is in question. There is no doubt he used the image as a free advertisement for his paint store. It is important to note that the front figures in the parade do somewhat resemble Major Stewart, Henry Boyle, Kootenai Brown and Duncan Campbell.

Glenbow Archives NA-1353-24



Glenbow Archives NA-1352-22

The preceding paragraph was written by Fort Macleod druggist and freelance writer John Higinbotham, who later became a successful Lethbridge businessman. This glamorous, glory-filled description was written for an eastern audience, weaned on James Fenimore Cooper romanticism, and the sensational dime novels of Ned Buntline. In reading the passage, one almost conjures up visions of a Western movie with dashing young soldiers off to fight in a glorious battle and return as conquering heroes. In truth, this is probably what the Rocky Mountain Rangers thought they were going to do as they rode out of Macleod, to fight and serve in one of the last wars to occur in North America, and the last fought on Canadian soil, the North West Rebellion.

If you mention the North West Rebellion (or the Riel Rebellion as it is more popularly known) to anyone, he/she immediately starts to think of Louis Riel, Gabriel Dumont, Big Bear, Poundmaker, and General Middleton. Visions come into the head, images of battles such as Batoche, Duck Lake, Frog Lake and Cut Knife Hill. In fact, most historians look at the 1885 series of battles as events associated mainly with the history of the upper regions of the Saskatchewan River. Southern Alberta is not thought to have played a significant part in the rebellion. Historians and writers for a hundred years

John D. Higinbotham, druggist at Fort Macleod in 1885. Although he did not join the Rangers, he took great interest in their training and activities. Besides providing supplies to the new militia, he wrote several articles on the Rangers for Ontario newspapers, and incorporated these tales into his 1933 book "When The West Was Young" Artist unknown.

have stated almost matter-of-factly, that General Strange's Alberta Field Force and the Frog Lake massacre are the only events even worthy of mention, as far as Alberta's role in the conflict is concerned.

The Riel Rebellion had a great effect on the entire country, from British Columbia to Nova Scotia, and the conflict is often regarded as Canada's 'civil war' for the deep divisions that were caused in the nation between natives and whites, French and English, east and west. In the United States, there was concern about the effect that the rebellion might have on American Indians, and the cavalrymen of the U.S. Army in outposts across the Montana and Dakota Territories were put on alert.

Alberta's involvement in the war came about from a fear by the white populace of the possibility of attack by the Blackfoot, Stoney, Sarcee, Blood and Peigan Indian tribes. As a result, a rancher and retired British General named Thomas Bland Strange was asked by the federal government to organize several local militia units into the Alberta

Field Force. The force's original mandate was to protect Calgary and southern Alberta, but they were later ordered to form a column to go to the scene of fighting at Frog Lake, and the mopping up of the last dissenters at Frenchman's Butte. The units that made up the Alberta Field Force were the Alberta Mounted Rifles, Steele's Scouts, the 9th Quebec Voltigeurs, the 65th Mount Royal Rifles, and the 92nd Winnipeg Light Infantry

An integral part of the Alberta Field Force does not come immediately to mind, however, or get much attention from most Rebellion historians. This militia unit did not make Strange's epic march to Fort Edmonton, and down the North Saskatchewan River valley. Indeed, 116 cowboys, army officers, ex-mounted policemen, ranchers, settlers, and trappers banded together to form a militia unit to guard the ranche country and its inhabitants. They were prepared to fight as mounted cavalry should the Rebellion spread to involve the discontented Blackfoot tribes or border-jumping American Indian raiding parties. They were also to augment patrols of the North West Mounted Police and provide security for railroad construction. This unit was known as the Rocky Mountain Rangers.

The Rangers will not be found at any of the famous Rebellion battles that dominate Canadian history texts. Most members of the unit did not see any action at all, and those who did see action would have been disappointed if they had been seeking any glory or the immortality of battle honours. The Rangers' activities lasted only four months in the spring of 1885, and certainly the skirmishes they did see, or any of their activities, can not be seen as ever affecting the course of the Rebellion, and are scarcely, if at all, reported in historic chronicles.

What is possibly more important to look at in a historical analysis of the Rocky Mountain Rangers is the explosive nature of the Rebellion, and perhaps even consider what might have been. One should also examine the hysteria and apprehension that is caused when a war is looming. Certainly, no one, neither the white settlers nor the plains Indians, knew what might happen, and so perhaps troops such as the Rangers, through their patrols and their vigilance, did keep the North West Rebellion from being worse than it was. While the Blackfoot-speaking Indian tribes of the southern plains (Blackfoot, Blood, Peigan, Sarcee, Stoney) eventually rejected Louis Riel's call for uprising, ranche country settlers doubted the Indians intentions throughout the rebellion's duration.

The North West Rebellion, and Louis Riel in particular, evoke the images of some of the most exciting times in the history of Canada. In the United States, the period of westward expansion was marked by considerable bloodshed. In western

Canada, life, while not as violent, was hardly as idyllic as popular writers trying to compare our two nations would have us believe.

Louis Riel walked the lines of change on the prairies, between native and white leaders on both sides of the border. Riel and his people gained both sympathy and revulsion. It is for this reason, that the author has chosen to examine the period of time that Riel spent in what was known as the 'Whoop-Up Country' of northern Montana, where he was attempting to sow the seeds of revolt in the Blackfoot tribes as early as 1880. Any reader examining this era must also take a look at the condition of the natives of southern Alberta, in the period between the arrival of the whiskey traders with the North West Mounted Police, and the start of the Rebellion. The phenomenal change that took place for the southern Alberta Blackfoot, in those fifteen years, laid the groundwork for a man like Louis Riel to attempt a revolution.

The news of the Rebellion's first battle at Duck Lake was the shot heard across the nation, that raised militias from Edmonton to Halifax. In the confusion and unrest of the day, residents of the frontier country tried to allay their fears by creating their own home-grown military companies, like the Rocky Mountain Rangers, to protect their settlements. Volunteers all, the names of the Rocky Mountain Rangers were truly a microcosm of southern Alberta history. Many stayed in this area and became leading citizens and pioneer ranchers and farmers. Some became townsmen and built very successful careers. One even became a British Earl. Some of the names have become immortal, like Kootenai Brown. Others, like Rattlesnake Jack Robson or William Allen Hamilton, have fallen through the cracks of history despite their own colourful careers. Many names have defied all investigations and remain in obscurity.

During the time period the subject covers, oft times the traditional English (Canadian) spelling of the word 'Ranch' was with an 'e' on the end. I have therefore unilaterally chosen to use this spelling 'Ranche', unless it is taken from another source.

This publication is respectfully dedicated to the memory of all of the 1885 Rocky Mountain Rangers, whether documented or not, and their surviving descendants.

The setting, Southern Alberta, 1885

The time was late March, 1885. In the foothills of the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and on the prairie grasslands beyond, Spring was beginning to lift the pall of an extremely bad winter, as range cattle began to graze on the new grass, and farmers began to consider the coming growing season. But the mood of a few of the original inhabitants of the prairies, was hardly as docile.

To begin to set the scene we must look back a bit in history. A scant twenty years earlier, the southern plains was truly the land of the native Indian. From the Red Deer River in the north, to the Missouri River in the south, from the Rocky Mountains on the west, out onto the eastern plains, in what we now call southern Alberta, spread the realm of the Blackfoot speaking nations: the Blackfoot, Blood, Peigan, Sarcee and Stoney. These were the tribal bands that would eventually make up the Blackfoot Confederacy of Treaty No. 7.

Technically, the land had been under the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company, under the charter of Charles II of England since 1670. But the native denizens paid little attention to English charters, if they had any knowledge of the document at all. Despite early contact with HBC traders such as Anthony Henday and Peter Fidler in the 1700s, the Blackfoot were always able to remain dominant in the basins of the Oldman, Bow, Milk, and Red Deer River regions.

Indeed the HBC for the most part stayed off the southern prairies, having little use in England for the buffalo skins that the Blackfoot had to trade. The natives were free to roam at will, hunting the vast buffalo herds and warring with their rivals the Crees to the east and north, and the Sioux nations to the southeast. In 1806, a group of Peigans had an altercation with the Lewis and Clark expedition on the Marias River, leading to a complete distrust of all whites and the total prevention of any white trading in the area for nearly thirty years.¹

The natives of southern Alberta began to make their first trade contacts in the 1830s, when traders from John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company began to infiltrate their territory. In 1850, the company's post on the Missouri River, Fort Lewis was rechristened Fort Benton² and became the center of trade for the southern Canadian plains for close to forty years.

After the American Civil War, the situation among the Blackfoot Confederacy began to be radically altered. The American Fur Company had collapsed, and in its place several independent

traders began to sprout up around Fort Benton. Chief among these was the powerful St. Louis firm of I. G. Baker & Company.

Among the Indians' rivals on the prairies was a new race of people, stemming from the natives' own roots. Since the time of Champlain, French, Scots, Irish and English traders, or 'Coureurs du Bois' (runners of the woods) had lived among native tribes. When some of these traders began to work for the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, they intermingled with Cree Indians, and raised their children to speak the native language and practise the white man's religion. As time went on these "half-breeds", or Metis people, began to develop their own settlements, living off the land, and competing (even warring) with native tribes for the buffalo herds.

In the late 1860s, a wave of industrialization was occurring in the American northeast. The new mechanization of factories and mills required a massive amount of belting to power the new machinery. The perfect material discovered for this application was the hide of the plains bison. Buffalo hides became a valuable new commodity, guaranteeing a disruption of native life forever.³

The massive buffalo hunts that followed were also seen by American government officials as a means to begin the movement of native tribes onto reservations, by the process of starvation. This brought to Montana and Dakota, the U.S. Army cavalry, Treaties, and an official policy of military displacement. The program led to a period of warfare with the Indians, in particular, tribes of the Sioux and Cheyenne, culminating in several tragedies for both sides.

A new circumstance was thrown into the mix when the Hudson's Bay Company, after observing these events to the south, feared an American invasion of its territory (à la the Mexican War) and subsequent annexation. In 1869, the very British HBC decided to get out of the land monopoly business, and turned over its holdings to the fledgling nation of Canada.⁴ Rupert's Land became known as the North West Territories.

The HBC had always managed to successfully keep the American traders out of its territory, and treated harshly anyone who dared to violate its monopoly. But in the late 1860s, the company began to lose its foothold, and a floodtide of American free-traders began trade with the Blackfoot peoples. To the two hundred year old 'sleeping giant', the end of its reign was imminent.

Under the new Canadian rule, there was virtually no apparent law or any official representation of any kind. The lack of legal authority, both during and after the official transfer, led to a virtual invasion by American hide hunters and whiskey traders, in concert with the Fort Benton firms of I. G. Baker and its chief rival, T. C. Power & Company.⁵

While the transfer did establish a British-Canadian stronghold on the prairie, it did not stop the whiskey trade and in fact, may have enhanced it. The politics of the transfer also brought a revolt at the Red River colony (now Winnipeg). Led by the revolutionary Louis Riel, the mixed-blood or Metis people objected to the transfer without recognition of their land holdings by the Dominion government.

The Red River settlement with Fort Garry at its center had become an important commercial trading center attracting a number of settlers from Ontario, into the area that had previously been populated by the Metis people and descendants of the Selkirk settlers. The new arrivals were a vocal lot, and for economic and political reasons petitioned for the annexation of the colony, becoming known as the 'Canada Firsters'.⁶

Metis inhabitants feared the annexation, for no officials had spoken with any of them, either from the HBC or representatives of the Dominion. In the summer of 1869, their worst fears were recognized when a Dominion Survey party, under John Stoughton Dennis, arrived and began to survey the colony into American style square-mile lots, completely ignoring the Metis river lot system. As the river lots were cut across by the new system, Riel and his followers became incensed and acted to stop the survey crews.⁷

On the premise of acting to protect their rights, 120 men under Riel seized control of Fort Garry on November 16, 1869. The official transfer of power was to take place on December 1, but the government withheld payment to the HBC. The new governor of the colony, William MacDougall, was prevented from entering the region by the Metis, and was forced to cool his heels at Pembina in the Dakota Territory. In the vacuum that followed, the Provisional Government of the Metis Nation was proclaimed over the colony, with Louis Riel sitting as President. Sir John A. Macdonald sent Donald Smith to the colony to mediate a settlement with Riel.⁸

A number of the Canada Firsters led by Dr. John Christian Schultz, defied the Provisional Government, and organized an attack on the stone fort on January 9, 1870. The invasion fizzled and 48 of the Canada Firsters were taken into custody. One of the Canadians, a surveyor named Thomas Scott, became racially abusive to his Metis jailers.

Finally having had enough of Scott, Riel's council ordered him to be executed by firing squad, on March 4.⁹



Glenbow Archives NA-5043

Louis Riel, Metis leader in two separate stands against the Canadian Government. For fourteen years between the Rebellions he drifted from job to job and was incarcerated for a time in a Montreal mental institution. He spent six years in northern Montana before he was persuaded to intervene on behalf of the Metis. After the North West Rebellion, Riel was brought to trial in Regina and executed for treason. This execution brought out deep divisions in Canada.

On May 12, 1870 the Canadian government recognized the Metis List of Rights and adopted it as the Manitoba Act, making the Red River Colony the fifth province in Confederation. Riel was recognized as the head of the government pending the arrival of a new lieutenant-governor, and militia troops that were to accompany him. But several of the militia, under Colonel Garnet Wolsley, were incensed by the execution of Thomas Scott, and sought revenge for his death.

Riel fled to the United States, leaving behind several Metis citizens of Fort Garry to suffer abuses by the militia troops. His last act was to discourage a raid into Manitoba by Fenian troops led by his former ally, J. J. O'Donoghue, from Pembina, Dakota Territory. The Fenian plot was disclosed and the would-be invaders were arrested by the U.S. Army.¹⁰ Riel was unofficially told by the

Lieutenant-Governor, Adams G Archibald, to stay out of the country. The revolutionary complied, but the west and Sir John A. Macdonald would certainly hear much more from Louis David Riel.

In 1873, Sir John A. Macdonald was finally moved to introduce an order-in-council, creating a police force to establish the Dominion's control over the former Hudson's Bay Company lands, now dubbed the North West Territories. The North West Mounted Police (NWMP) was formed and ordered to maintain the laws of Canada on the new frontier.

The ink was hardly dry on the order when news broke in Ottawa of a shoot-out in the Cypress Hills. Thirteen wolf hunters operating out of Fort Benton, Montana had fought and massacred over forty Assiniboine Indians, near an illegal American trading post called Fort Farwell. The vision of this armed invasion on Canadian territory strengthened the resolve to get the police out into the territories before all control was lost.¹¹

In 1874, the NWMP arrived in the area that is now southern Alberta. The whiskey traders were said to have been shut down and the "notorious" Fort Whoop-Up put out of business. In reality, the whiskey traders and their Fort Benton backers, merely switched occupations, and began making even greater profits fulfilling the Police's supply contracts.¹²

In time, the Indian nations as a whole began to bargain with the government when it became apparent that their traditional ways of life were being eroded. Treaties were negotiated and rights to hunting grounds were exchanged for reserves, money and the promise of assistance with education, farming instruction, and health benefits.

The first agreement to affect the prairie inhabitants was Treaty No. 4, signed at Fort Qu'Appelle in 1874. Two years later, Plains Cree leaders met to sign Treaty No. 6, at Fort Carlton. Treaty No. 6 could almost be said to set the stage for the trouble of the North West Rebellion. It was signed by several leaders whose names would later become synonymous with the Rebellion, including Poundmaker, Red Pheasant and Beardy. Another who grudgingly signed was Big Bear.¹³

Still, the native leaders including Crowfoot and Red Crow were glad to see a control of the whiskey trade to their people, even though the business still flourished among whites as an underground industry. In 1877, several of the southern Plains Indian leaders gathered at Blackfoot Crossing, and signed Treaty No. 7 and resigned themselves to life on reserves, and to government control of their lives. The treaty benefits were meant to ease the pain of the disappearing buffalo herds, and to surrender

lands in exchange for annuities like food, money and cattle. But in coming years, despite successes at farming, leaders would continually be disappointed by the government's treatment of them.¹⁴

In time the police set up various outposts. These included Fort Macleod on the Oldman River, Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills and Fort Calgary on the Bow River, as well as various one to three man detachments scattered around the area. Soon, the area began to be populated and towns sprang up. Over 150,000 square miles of prairie were opened up as grazing lands, and leases of up to 100,000 acres were granted to ranching interests, beginning with discharged mounted policemen like Edward Maunsell, and William Winder. Soon other investors poured in from Ontario, Quebec, Great Britain and the United States. Longhorn cattle, originally from Texas, were trailed in from below the 49th parallel (Canadian and U.S. border) to fatten on the lush virgin buffalo grass.¹⁵

In 1881, the federal government finally began to live up to its promise to have a transcontinental railroad built across the prairies to British Columbia, in order to fulfill the country's commitment to that province as a condition of it entering Confederation. In 1883, the Canadian Pacific Railroad reached the area now known as Alberta. The significance of this event could not be ignored by anyone, and the prairies could never again be the same. Travel from the east was greatly improved and new markets were opened up for the shipment of cattle, timber, and coal. The CPR would in succeeding years bring droves of newcomers from the east and all over the world to open the country to agricultural development.

The railroad could not help but have an affect on the native inhabitants, their heads still swimming from the changes brought upon by the treaty programs. The arrival of government institutions like the NWMP and the CPR also gave a signal to the Metis people along the Saskatchewan River, that their way of life was once again about to be changed irrevocably. They could not help draw comparisons to the Canada First movement in the former Red River colony, and the subsequent violence that brought so much tragedy to Metis families.

In the summer of 1884, four Metis riders from Batoche, including Gabriel Dumont, arrived at a Catholic mission school in Montana, in order to convince the teacher at the school to return with them to the South Saskatchewan River. He did and history was made forever, when the Metis once again sought the wisdom of the controversial "prophet", Louis Riel. Riel saw the treated tribes of the Cree, Blackfoot, and Sioux nations as similarly oppressed allies. In less than nine months, the young country of Canada would be facing its own civil war.

Captain John Stewart and the Stewart Ranche

Cattle ranching in the southern plains of Alberta essentially began when the Methodist missionary, the Reverend John MacDougall, bought a bull and eleven cows at Fort Edmonton, and drove them south to his Morleyville mission.¹ With the arrival of the North West Mounted Police in 1874, a market was created at the police posts for beef and milk. Before long, American traders and ranchers were bringing herds across the line to feast upon the grazing lands that Captain John Palliser, in 1859, had called part of "the great American desert". Soon, discharged members of the NWMP such as William Winder and Edward Maunsell were extolling the virtues of the native prairies and boasting of the grassland's money-making potential.

The opening of the 1880s was truly a golden age in the blossoming Canadian ranching industry. In 1881, the Conservative government of Sir John A. Macdonald passed an order-in-council granting any individual or ranching company a grazing lease of up to 100,000 acres for the rate of one cent, per acre, per year. Thus, the impetus was set for large scale financiers and friends of the federal government to be granted leases. This was the era of the big open range ranches, and the new industry became dominated mostly by corporate investment from eastern Canada and Great Britain. Among these financiers was a young militia officer from Ottawa, by the name of Captain John O. Stewart.

Like the rest of the newly established ranching aristocracy, John Stewart came from a well-to-do background and a socially well-established family. In modern day Ottawa, an upscale neighborhood known as Stewart commemorates the family name. His father was the epitome of the frontier businessman in the Bytown area during the 1830s and 1840s, and Ottawa historians hold William Stewart up as a shining example of the stereotypical pillar of the community.²

William Stewart, a Presbyterian Scot from the island of Skye, migrated to Upper Canada in 1816, and with his family, settled in Glengarry County, in the community of Longueuil. In 1827, he moved to the rough timber village of Bytown (later to be Ottawa), and became a successful merchant in the rough-and-tumble Lower Town area. He also dabbled in the logging business for himself, but principally he was satisfied to supply the timber trade, and to speculate on boom-town real estate.³



Glenbow Archives NA-1724-1

The commanding officer of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, Major John Stewart. This William J. Topley photo shows Stewart's combination of Dominion Militia uniform (Dragoon Guard cavalry tunic, haversack, and breeches) with functional western gear (boots, spurs, cartridge belt, Sam Browne belt and holster, wide-brimmed Stetson).

Stewart's retail supply business worked to outfit the various small-time loggers, and operated on a system that engaged credit lines, barter, and profit-sharing in the timber contractors' operations. This type of trade was risky, and any amount of variables could leave Stewart holding the bill. Changes in economic conditions, weather, or the fortunes of the lumberer could, and occasionally did, leave Stewart on the brink of disaster. Outside forces often dictated failure or success. The supply market upriver set the price of the commodities he would have to purchase, and the Montreal wholesalers also set the freight costs by its control of steamboats and barges. The finishing mills in Britain set the cost of lumber, as most of the processing was accomplished in the mother country.⁴

Soon William Stewart became involved in civic politics, as a town councillor in 1828, and as a board of health official during the cholera epidemics of the early 1830s. During this period, he also became active in the local militia preserving peace during the Shiner Riots.⁵ Becoming polished in the political process, Stewart directed his energy to improving commerce in Bytown and changing the terms of trade to his own favor.⁶ Over the years, William Stewart made his fortune as broker, lumber operator, financing small logging operations and marketing timber on their behalf. Being fluent in English, Gaelic, and French, he was able to deal personally with all of the various parties and became spokesman for the Ottawa Lumber Association. In that position, he lobbied for improved river navigation on the Ottawa, and for better and cheaper access to Crown timber reserves.⁷ Essentially a capitalist, William Stewart surrounded himself with an intelligence network, keeping up to date on market conditions, changes in weather, and political moods in Quebec City and Britain. By keeping his business flexible, ready to re-invest or bail out at a moment's notice, Stewart became prosperous.

In 1841, Upper and Lower Canada were brought together as the United Province of Canada. William Stewart ran for the Bytown riding in the new Legislative Assembly, but was defeated. In 1843, he was successful in the Russell riding, and finally won Bytown the following year. He lost his seat in 1848, but continued to run unsuccessfully on several occasions.⁸ Soon Stewart made acquaintance with a rising politician, the future Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, who would come to have a profound influence on his son. In 1854, William and Catherine Stewart, were blessed with the arrival of one of their nine children, the future Captain John Stewart. But father and son were not fated to know each other well, for the elder Stewart passed away March 26, 1856.⁹

The story of John Stewart later picks up May 23, 1872. By now, Bytown had become the City of

Ottawa, and named capital of the new Dominion of Canada. On this date, the Volunteer Militia Troop of Cavalry was formed. Captain Nicholas Sparks was the unit's first commanding officer. Eighteen-year-old Sergeant John Stewart, was named 2nd Lieutenant Cornet on November 8, pending his officer's qualification, from a military academy. The Volunteer Militia provided a cavalry escort for the Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, at the opening of Parliament in 1873, and again in March, 1874.¹⁰

Upon organization, this 23-man militia troop received its gear, and marched 59 miles to Prescott, Ontario. This was an annual drill, in which the officers and troops would drill for 16 days, beginning on June 20. In 1877, Nicholas Sparks left the troop, and James Slater took command. John Stewart was subsequently promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Soon after, Stewart took a position at Strathroy, Ontario as an accountant for the Bank of Commerce, and continued as an officer in the Volunteer Militia Troop of Cavalry.¹¹

During the general election of 1878, the opposition leader and former Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, began his comeback against the incumbent Alexander Mackenzie. A Conservative rally was held at Strathroy, in the form of one of Sir John A.'s famous campaign picnics. Lt. John Stewart, a Conservative supporter, carrying on the family tradition as a political ally of Macdonald's, assembled a group of horsemen, and drilled them as a ceremonial escort for the candidate.¹²

On September 17, 1878, the Liberal government of Alexander Mackenzie was defeated in the general election, and the boisterous Conservative, Sir John A. Macdonald, was now back in office. Back in power, the Prime Minister remembered Stewart's gesture at Strathroy, and invited him by telegram to Ottawa. Returning back to his home town at once, Stewart found that Sir John A. had a job for him.

John Campbell, the Marquis of Lorne, married to Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, the daughter of Queen Victoria, was about to become the new Governor-General of Canada. The Colonial Secretary had expressed the concern of the British government, that Canada had not provided an adequate escort guard for the Queen's representative and the Princess. The always canny Sir John decided to kill two small birds with one stone, provide an escort and have a political friend head the unit.

An order-in-council was effected to set aside the sum of \$4,700 for the purpose of reorganizing the Volunteer Militia Troop of Cavalry, and John Stewart was personally selected as the commanding officer of the 'Dragoon Guards'. To perform this task, Stewart gave up his position in the Bank of

Commerce. As a further enticement, Macdonald offered him the commissionership of the Dominion Police. He discussed this matter with his brother, Macleod Stewart, the future mayor of Ottawa, but declined the posting.¹³

Recruits in the new guard unit included former Mounted Policeman, John Herron (as Sergeant-Major), Herron's business partner, Thomas Bates, and Bank of Montreal employee Duncan Campbell. Stewart would become good friends with Herron and Campbell as they all became comrades together both in business and later, in the Rocky Mountain Rangers.

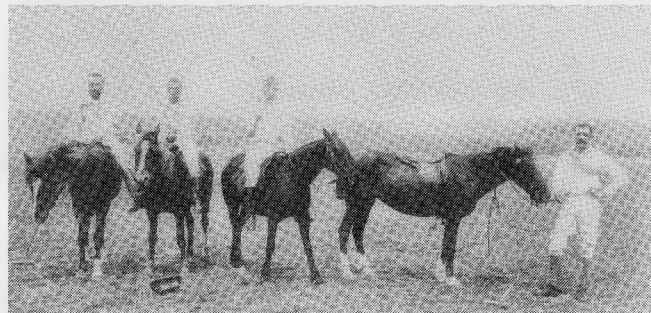
The Dragoon uniform consisted of a blue tunic, pipe-clay belt and haversack, dark blue trousers with white stripe, and a Prussian style cork helmet, complete with spike and horsehair plume. This would certainly contrast with the crude but functional plainsman clothing Stewart would adopt in 1885 as commanding officer of the Rocky Mountain Rangers.¹⁴

In 1881, Captain Stewart resigned from the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards and decided to leave Ottawa to parlay part of his family fortune into the newly opened west. Coming to Fort Macleod with intentions of investment, he turned at once to Pincher Creek, and through John Herron, negotiated the purchase of the North West Mounted Police Remount Station.

This small horse farm had been established by the NWMP in 1878, in recognition of the need for a strong horse breeding program, for provision of sturdy mounts to augment the force's long patrols. The lush green foothills alongside the mountain-fed creek was considered an ideal location. A horse farm was badly needed by the police, as the lack of good mounts had nearly contributed to the force's early demise on their 1874 march west. In fact, in the winter of 1874-75, most of the police herd was forced to winter near Fort Shaw, in Montana Territory, so that the horses might survive the season. In 1878, it was decided to build a police post and a farm in order to care for horses not in use, and to grow enough hay and oats to take care of mounts at other outposts.

Policemen were sent up into the foothills to cut timber for the station. First on the scene were Sub-Constable Charles Kettles, Constable William Reid, Constable John (Jack) Johnson, and Constable Peter McEwen. They were soon joined by Constable Alfred Hardwick Lynch-Staunton, Sergeant William F Parker, and Constable James Bruneau, with Inspector Albert (Alf) Shurtliff commanding, who drove over two hundred head of horses, to the new farm. When the NWMP arrived, they were met by several white settlers who had been in the area for

some time, including Maxie Broulette, William Cox Allen and Mart Holloway. The herd was turned out to graze on the flat below where the town now stands, while the barracks and outbuildings were being constructed.¹⁵



Glenbow Archives NA-184-73

Alfred Lynch-Staunton, at right, his brother Richard 3rd from left, founders of an Alberta ranching dynasty, participate in an 1899 polo match. As a policeman, Alfred helped establish the remount farm that would become the basis of the Stewart Ranch.

Among the farm's founding policemen were some who would later be found in the ranks of the Rocky Mountain Rangers these included Lynch-Staunton, Kettles, Reid and McEwen, as well as settlers Broulette and Allen. Living conditions were typical of the times. When it rained the roof leaked, and the food consisted of sowbelly and dried apples. Apparently "liquid refreshment" was in ample quantity, according to Lynch-Staunton's memoirs, as he states that the locals were very good at making bootleg whiskey. It is interesting to note policemen talking openly of this, since they were supposed to be enforcing a prohibition on alcohol.¹⁶

The farm and the settlers in the area soon provided the basis for the founding of the town of Pincher Creek. In 1880, some of the policemen took early discharges, and along with white settlers, began to see the area as being ideal for cattle ranching. Lynch-Staunton, Kettles, Bruneau, all settled near the townsite, as did the newly-retired Commissioner James Macleod. Other policemen, followed suit including George Canning Ives, James Schofeld, Samuel James Sharpe and Sgt. John Henry Gresham Bray. New arrivals included Charlie Smith and his bride, Marie Rose Smith, Alex Mildred Morden, reputed to have brought the first white family into Pincher Creek, and Charles Geddes.¹⁷

Unfortunately, the Remount Station was less than a roaring success. Though the herds grew, operating the ranche took too much time and manpower away from the under-manned force's primary duties. Rustling from the herd (by both whites and Indians) could not be controlled, and the decision was made that feed and horses would be purchased from private ranchers. This provided the fortune seeking John Stewart with the opportunity for which he was looking.

Stewart took over the Remount Station in 1881, with the help of his old friend John Herron, who became manager of the newly formed Stewart Ranche. The former Remount Station along Indian Farm Creek became the base of the ranche. A federal government grazing lease of 23,000 acres between the creek and along the upper Oldman River was taken out.¹⁸ It is estimated that another 50,000 acres also fed Stewart horses and cattle. Part of Stewart's plan was to sell horses, beef and feed to the Mounted Police. Sales to the force were phenomenal. Out of 107 remounts purchased for the force in 1884, the Stewart Ranche Company provided 49. Other ranches only supplied 1 or 2, and only one other provided more than five.¹⁹

Stewart also would fulfill beef contracts to the various Indian reserves. Despite the racist feelings of a lot of ranchers, Stewart held the Indians in very high regard, and often expressed a deep feeling of sympathy for the mistreated natives of the Treaty No. 7 bands. In order to fulfill many of these contracts, and to aid in obtaining fresh stock from the United States, Stewart entered into a partnership with a renowned Montana cattleman named R. S. Ford.²⁰ Together they formed the business of Ford & Stewart in Macleod, and hired Duncan Campbell to operate it.²¹

Stewart took in as a partner, an experienced cattle and horseman named James M. Christie, a former employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had come into the country from the north, and had worked for the monolithic trading company for the princely sum of twenty dollars a month. When the NWMP arrived, Christie left the HBC, and began to trade in cattle. He settled near Fort Calgary and operated a small dairy, supplying fresh milk and butter to the police outpost.²²

In 1876, Jim Christie drove a small herd of horses in from Montana, and began to trade them with the Indians and the police. The police, desperate for good mounts, paid him up to a hundred dollars a head. It was likely this sense of horseflesh that Captain Stewart was looking for when he brought Christie in on his operation, as he was looking at the police market for horses when he set up the Ranche. When the Ranche went into business, the livestock brand bore the initials S C, for Stewart & Christie, (the ranche was often referred to as Stewart & Christie, even though it was traditionally called the Stewart). It was said that Christie took charge of the horse end of the spread, while Herron managed the cattle. Jim Christie stayed with the Stewart until 1888.²³

As was the custom among the Alberta ranching endeavours of the era, the Stewart Ranche was often visited by friends and relatives of the Captain, including his brother, Macleod Stewart, who also

held money in the ranching venture, as well as in the Edmonton & Saskatchewan Land Company. The guests were impressed by the extensive number of buildings and by the horse stables, much of it remnant of the farms days as a police remount station. Other guests included Jonas Jones who stayed at Pincher Creek and began his own operation, and a gentleman dandy named Johnny Bullock, who brought with him an imported tandem horse carriage called an English Dog Cart. Though chided for this extravagance, Bullock also stayed to ranche.²⁴

The day-to-day goings-on at the Stewart was not unlike any other ranche, what with horse-breaking, range riding, and round-ups. Among the hired hands on the Stewart were future Ranger recruits like James T. Routledge and James Schofield.²⁵ Jim Christie also set up a race track, almost a staple for the aristocratic ranching elite of any area of Alberta.



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19770285079

John Herron came west with the NWMP in 1874, and spent four years at Fort Calgary and Fort Macleod. He served as an escort on General Selby-Smyth's expedition, and once rode solo on a dangerous trek from Salt Lake City to Calgary at the height of native tensions in Montana Territory. His experience and military background proved useful in his occupation as manager of the Stewart Ranche.

Stewart's business interests and partnerships did not end at the ranche. He and Duncan Campbell set up stagecoach routes between Macleod, Coalbanks, Medicine Hat, Calgary and Pincher Creek. They soon obtained the government mail contract for these routes, a small feat given Stewart's high government connections and Campbell being the Macleod postmaster ²⁶ The two stagecoaches purchased for the Royal Mail Stage Line were the finest of the Concord style, with strap slung-springs, inside seats, and seats on top of the 'hurricane deck' of the coach. The drivers of the four and six horse teams included Maxie Broulette, (a future Ranger) and the slightly crazy Frank (Polly) Pollinger, who it was said could scare anyone riding with him, if he set his mind to it. Broulette's wife, known only as "Mother" Broulette, would also take the reins on occasion when Maxie was indisposed.²⁷

Stewart shared the Macleod-Calgary mail contract with the express company of Leeson & Scott, operated by the entrepreneurs James Scott and George Kidd Leeson, who operated mail and stage lines throughout the North West Territories ²⁸ Stewart often took in partners in his operations. Besides Jim Christie, Duncan Campbell, and Leeson & Scott, John Stewart also had financial backing from his brother, Macleod Stewart, now the mayor of Ottawa. He also took in an American partner, J S Ford, a Montana rancher who shared in the Macleod meat packing company, Ford & Stewart. Like his long dead father had done in the Bytown lumber trade, John Stewart was one of the true capitalists of the west's early ranching settlements.

Louis Riel and the Indians

Native Relations on the Southern Plains and the beginning of the North West Rebellion

If John Stewart and his Rocky Mountain Rangers had seen action in 1885, the confrontation would most likely have involved taking up arms against their neighbors of the Blackfoot Confederacy. For this reason, it is important to examine the issues that could have brought the native nations to the brink of bloodshed with representatives of a government that had promised to protect them. In most texts Crowfoot is described as the wise old chief who chose to remain loyal to the government. The truth is that Crowfoot and his counterpart Red Crow, had a decision to make that was anything but easy. The temptation to fight came about over matters that had been building up over a number of years. The Canadian prairies had been fortunate in escaping the carnage that had occurred during the Great Sioux Wars, just across the 49th parallel. Alberta settlers would be just as fortunate to evade direct danger in the North West Rebellion.

The entire Blackfoot Confederacy was in a serious state of decline by 1885. When buffalo herds began to dwindle, native leaders saw Treaty No. 7 as a means of survival for their people. But the new system was not working out as planned. Government inefficiency, corruption, and budget cutbacks were straining the terms of the treaty, slowing delivery of food and supplies and bringing starvation to the Reserves. Boredom, disease and death were breeding discontent among the young men of the Warrior societies, making them difficult to control.

Relations between the Canadian government and the mixed-blood Metis people living along the South Saskatchewan River were also deteriorating, setting the stage for the return of the enigmatic Louis Riel, the revolutionary of the Red River Rebellion. Riel spent the years from 1878 to 1884 in northern Montana, not far from southern Alberta. It was during this time that Riel made the alliances and conducted the activities that led to the outbreak of the North West Rebellion. He involved himself in politics, religion, teaching and law, all the while being watched from across the border by the NWMP. During the six years he spent in Montana, his political and social ideals were shaped.

In the spring of 1883, after several years of living in the Metis camps, Louis Riel found his first gainful employment when he was asked by the Jesuit

Priests to become the schoolmaster at St. Peter's Mission, a residential school for native and Metis children, on the Sun River near present day Cascade, Montana. The posting offered Riel a home for his family, and a salary while he continued his efforts on behalf of the Metis people, awaiting that 1884 day when he would once again be asked to lead his people.

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In 1877, the disappearance of the buffalo forced the Blackfoot-speaking nations to accept the terms for the surrender of 35,000 square miles of their land. Though the nation gained title to Rupert's Land by purchasing it from the Hudson's Bay Company, true control depended on the satisfaction of the natives. The Plains Cree tribes of western Canada had begun to surrender territory, and now the southern plains tribes would gather to sign Treaty No. 7 at Blackfoot Crossing.

The presence of the NWMP contributed to the aura of trust that Crowfoot, Red Crow, Bull's Head, Eagle Tail, Crow Eagle, and others had for the government. Troopers and officers were called out, not just for ceremony, but to preserve the peace. The largest known gathering of Indians ever in Canada, (around 4,800) was taking place, and what was a simple encampment could easily turn into a battle if measures of control were not taken.¹ On September 23, the policemen's worst fears were nearly realized. Six hundred Blackfoot warriors stripped and painted, mounted their ponies and rode to the top of the hill above the campsite. Charging down the hill, the warriors circled the treaty tent, shrieking and shouting war cries, and firing their rifles into the air. The charge turned out to be merely a tactic to inform the officials and police that the Blackfoot nations were still a force to be reckoned with.² The incident said a lot for the tenacity of the mounted police, for one wrong move, one false gesture, or a stray shot by anyone could have turned the entire incident into bloodshed. The lessons learned by the horsemen were not forgotten when the troubles of the North West Rebellion came.

The Stoneys of Chief Bearspaw, east of Calgary, barely posed a threat in 1885. Their neutrality in the looming conflict was guaranteed by the intervention of their trusted ally Reverend John McDougall, a Methodist missionary whose family had lived among their people for several years.

The Blackfoot and the Bloods, while heavily supervised by the police and Indian agents, were not confined to the reserves. They were permitted to travel off the reserves to find game or gather wood, rights enshrined in the treaty.³ Their freedom of movement was a constant source of worry to settlers. Infighting between the tribes was still a problem, as was the habit of raiding horse stock. Frederick Ings recounted an incident near his Midway Rancho, (near modern Nanton) in the early 1880s.

I remember one fight between the Bloods and Stoneys had just above the ranch now owned by Frazier Hunt. I was on the range that day, not far from the scene of the hostilities. The Bloods had been stealing Stoney horses, afterwards the Stoneys told me that they killed a Blood and that one of them had been badly wounded in the thigh.⁴

Ings and his fellow Highwood range ranchers had become accustomed to loaning rifles to the Stoney Indians, who would always return them when they finished their hunt, often providing a trophy head or skin as payment. When the trouble started, hardly anyone had a doubt about the Stoneys.⁵ But friction had always existed between the Sarcees (T'su T'ina) and the ranchers. In the face of rations cutbacks from the federal government and starvation, many of the Sarcees helped themselves to ranchers' cattle. One could hardly blame them. For hundreds of years they had existed on the meat of the buffalo, but now the buffalo were gone. Treaty No. 7 was meant to alleviate this problem by providing the bands with beef cattle provided by local ranchers. When the Indian agents could not fulfill the agreement, the natives saw themselves as merely taking what was promised to them. Given the sometimes militaristic nature of some of the ranchers, it was a miracle that war did not develop at an earlier date.

The Peigan (Pikuni) chief, (Sitting On An) Eagle Tail, signed Treaty No. 7 and negotiated with the government for a reserve at the foot of the Porcupine Hills, along the Oldman River. While their Blood and Blackfoot cousins were off in Montana chasing the last of the buffalo herds, Eagle Tail's band settled down to farming on their reserve. For the next few years they went through the transition quite successfully, building log houses and producing good crops of potatoes, turnips and oats. They sold produce to settlers and supplied seed to other tribes.⁶ Had the Peigans' crops not been successful, they may have been tempted to join the Rebellion. In fact, the government had encouraged them to plant even more acres. It was not until after the Rebellion that the harsh realities of farming sank in. In the fall of 1885, a surplus of potatoes was produced and thousands of pounds went rotten. For the next fifteen years, drought and cutworms

prevented the Peigans from ever repeating their 1879-1885 farming successes. Eagle Tail died in 1885, and was succeeded by his son, North Axe.⁷



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19770161000

North Axe became chief of the Peigan tribe in 1885 after the death of his father Sitting On An Eagle Tail. Eagle Tail had echoed the words of Red Crow and maintained neutrality during the North West Rebellion. North Axe carried on his father's promise and was rewarded with a medal and a trip to Ottawa in 1886.

The Blackfoot (or Siksika), namesakes of the Confederacy's common language, took their reserve along the Bow River centered at Blackfoot Crossing, east of Calgary. The tribe gained a measure of fame from its leader, Crowfoot, who was seen by people not familiar with tribal structures and alliances as the spokesman for the entire Blackfoot Confederacy, even though he only commanded one tribe. His fair-minded nature made him a natural choice for the government to negotiate with, he was often asked by the government to talk for all Blackfoot-speaking native leaders. Crowfoot did little to dissuade the confusion, much to the annoyance of other chieftains such as the Bloods' Red Crow.⁸



Glenbow Archives NA-3700-3

Crowfoot kept his people on neutral ground throughout the Rebellion despite pressures from Riel, and the threat of his own warriors' mutiny. For his oath of loyalty to the Lt.-Governor, he received a medal, a trip to eastern Canada, and a lifetime pass on the railway. But more important to Crowfoot, he kept his tribal alliance with the Bloods and gained his starving people much-needed extra provisions.

After the treaty signing, the Blackfoot continued to chase the last of the dwindling buffalo herds into the United States along the Judith, Musselshell, and Milk Rivers. While in northern Montana, the Blackfoot began to travel with Metis hunters, and in 1879, an educated half-breed named Louis Riel walked into Crowfoot's camp.⁹

The Metis leader told Crowfoot that the buffalo had left because of the mounted police, and that the new treaty would be ignored. Riel advocated all out war with the whites and a union of Metis, Cree, Sitting Bull's Sioux and the Blackfoot Confederacy to create an Indian-dominated republic. Crowfoot wanted nothing to do with this man, and feared what could happen if his younger warriors were stirred up by the rebel's tough talk. Riel desired a general meeting of the tribes to be held in the Tiger Hills of Montana, and from there an attack on Wood Mountain, Fort Walsh and Fort Macleod. To this end, Riel had tried to hijack a shipment of guns and ammunition from a wagon train, but was unable to bribe the freighters into looking the other way. When American authorities learned of the Tiger Hills meeting, soldiers were sent to the area, and Louis Riel had to give up yet another scheme in his fight with the Canadian authorities.¹⁰

Before returning to Canada the Blackfoot once again were visited by Louis Riel and some half-breed buffalo hunters, camping with Crowfoot's group along with the Cree hunting parties of Big Bear. By the spring of 1881, trouble was brewing between the Canadian Indians camped in the Missouri basin and the American ranchers. Illegal whiskey was once again raising havoc among the Blackfoot, and in June a party of young warriors went on a horse raid into the Yellowstone River region. The Crows who were raided were on a reservation under army protection, and the U.S. Cavalry was soon in pursuit. Crowfoot admonished the thieves, and personally returned the horses to the Rocky Point army post. By then, diseased, starving, and nearly horseless themselves, the Blackfoot decided to return to Canada.¹¹

Returning to Blackfoot Crossing, Crowfoot's people realized that in order to survive they were going to have to learn how to farm and take rations from the government. While some measure of success came from farming, the ration program was rife with corruption. Little respect was shown the Indians by Indian Department employees and rations were often withheld, either to obtain higher prices elsewhere or to force the women into prostitution. The conditions nearly led to war when a Blackfoot warrior society, The Black Soldiers, fired shots into an Indian Department house. The incident led to the arrest of a minor chief named Bull Elk by Inspector Dickens, who later was forced to release him at gunpoint. Bull Elk was arrested again on the same charge, and sentenced to fourteen days in jail. From then on, Crowfoot never again trusted the North West Mounted Police.¹² When the Canadian Pacific Railway arrived in 1883 Crowfoot, with the prodding of Father Lacombe, negotiated a right-of-way to allow the tracks to run through the reserve. Extra rations would mysteriously appear to entice the chief to allow the trains to pass through. The old chief distrusted all government officials more than ever, and learned how to play the game in order to gain more money and rations for his tribe.¹³

In that same year, Big Bear contacted Crowfoot by messenger with an invitation to a Grand Council. The messenger was arrested, and the NWMP informed all leaders that no such council would be tolerated.¹⁴ The next year, a half-breed named Bear's Head, a representative of Louis Riel sent to see Crowfoot, contacted some Blackfoot hunters near High River but was arrested when he came near Blackfoot Crossing. After his release on a vagrancy charge, Bear's Head did get to see the chief. By this time, after years of starvation and abused faith, Crowfoot was in a mood to listen.¹⁵

Inspector Sam Steele of the NWMP was alerted and Bear's Head was again arrested, but escaped off the train taking him to Calgary and sneaked back

into the Blackfoot camp. Steele followed, barged into Crowfoot's tipi during a council and removed Bear's Head physically. The insulted chief had the upper hand and, given the mood of his warriors, could easily have killed Steele and his two constables. Crowfoot chose discretion and attended the half-breed's trial in Calgary. Bear's Head was tried for disturbing the peace, was acquitted and soon left the country.¹⁶ By now, Crowfoot was fed up with the mounted police and the government.

The Bloods (Kai-Nai) were very nearly the hold-outs of Treaty No. 7. Red Crow, their leader, made it well known that while he would accept Crowfoot as the Confederacy's spokesman, each band was distinct and second to none. The Bloods had been expected to be able to live on their own by hunting buffalo for at least ten years past the treaty's signing. But herds in Canada were devastated by 1879, and they were forced into Montana in search of new hunting grounds. When the Bloods returned, they realized that land set out for them east of Blackfoot Crossing was unfit. Red Crow petitioned the Indian Department to move the reserve to their traditional camping grounds along the Belly and St. Mary's Rivers, giving them the largest reserve in Canada.¹⁷



Provincial Archives of Alberta B-8, Ernest Brown Collection

Red Crow, of the Blood Tribe, commanded perhaps the greatest numbers of any of the Blackfoot nation. Though he suffered indignation at the hands of the government's Indian policies, he steadfastly chose to remain loyal and reject Cree and Metis calls for Rebellion. Likely Red Crow's influence and decisiveness guided Crowfoot to do likewise.

The tribe's leaders lent all their encouragement to their people to turn from hunting to farming. By 1882, 250 acres had been broken and 70,000 pounds of potatoes were harvested.¹⁸ But the Bloods did not subjugate their spirit. In 1883, a Cree war party stole 45 horses from the reserve. A chief named White Calf gathered two hundred warriors and left in pursuit toward Fort Walsh. The Bloods and the NWMP recovered the horses relatively peacefully, but at least one of the Cree was killed by the Blood warriors.¹⁹

The Bloods were not entirely blameless in horse raiding. Several parties made runs into Montana and used the "Medicine Line" to escape retribution, frustrating American ranchers and police in their pursuits. On one occasion, two American ranchers crossed the border in pursuit, and with the assistance of the Fort Macleod NWMP were able to take their horses home, at the risk of their lives and those of the Mounties.²⁰

The raids symbolized the fierceness of the Bloods. The NWMP received a letter from Choteau County Sheriff John J. Healy, announcing that the people of Montana would no longer tolerate Canadian Indian raiders.²¹ Fearing that some of his people might be lynched in Montana, Red Crow effected a ban on all trips south of the border. The tribe's warrior societies were to make sure the decree was enforced.²²

The Bloods' life on the reserve was catastrophic to their health. They became susceptible to scrofula, erysipelas, tuberculosis, influenza, and measles. The outbreaks were disastrous and the population of the tribe dropped by over 700 in the years from 1877 to 1885.²³ In 1882, the government appointed an ex-mountie named Cecil Denny as the Indian Agent. A two year diplomatic scrap ensued between Denny and Red Crow, as the agent attempted to circumvent the chief's control of the band, including holding elections to replace him. Red Crow always came out on top as the traditional leader.²⁴

In 1883, the event that could have pushed Red Crow onto the side of Louis Riel happened. Bureaucrats in the federal government declared that too much money was being spent on employees and rations for the Indian Department. With no thought to the promises that were made, Denny was ordered to cut back. With a fury not known at other Indian Agencies, Cecil Denny arbitrarily decided that one thousand Blood Indians were not entitled to treaty benefits.²⁵ Whole families saw their daily rations cut in half or more. Denny saved the government thousands of dollars but pushed the proud, fearless people further to the edge of desperation. The effect that food cutbacks had on the Bloods was immediate. In the absence of government issued beef, all the tribesmen knew was that somebody

owed them cattle. The younger warriors saw abundant cattle freely grazing where their former staple, the buffalo once did, and took what they wanted from the local ranchers. Upon seeing the effects on the Bloods, Denny complained to Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney on the Bloods' behalf, but to no avail. Denny resigned and was replaced by another ex Mountie, William Pocklington.

In 1884, Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney saw in the Confederacy the potential for disaster. He knew from the Indian Agents and police of the prevailing conditions, and of the Metis and Cree messengers. Dewdney was a shrewd politician, and made a move to replace bread with circuses. Whether anybody knew it at the time, the governor may have made a decision that affected western history. He invited the three chiefs, Crowfoot of the Blackfoot, Eagle Tail of the Peigan, and Red Crow of the Bloods to meet with him in Regina, and to travel with him to Winnipeg. He even stated the reason for the trip:

*to offset the influences brought to bear upon the Indians of Treaty 7 with a view of prevailing upon them to join in a general stand against the government.*²⁶

The native leaders' previous contact with whites had not prepared any of them for the wonders of the modern city of Winnipeg. Crowfoot, Red Crow and Eagle Tail had only seen rough-hewn log and clapboard towns like Fort Macleod, Calgary or Fort Benton, and believed that to be the extent of the white man's population and technology. But when the chiefs saw the brick and stone structures of the city, saw the fifteen thousand people that lived in that contained area, and the awesome power of the fearsome locomotive that had carried them to the city, the three leaders formed an entirely different opinion. They also toured Stony Mountain Penitentiary, saw some of their native brethren imprisoned there, and the weapons of war that could easily be turned on them. The lesson was not lost on the leaders, Crowfoot in particular.²⁷

Back on the reserves, the Indian Department lost no time in thinking up new insults. The issues of fresh beef to families on the Peigan and Blood Reserves were replaced by barrels of salted bacon, a food that was alien to the native diet. They had been promised fresh beef, and the bacon rations were seen as offensive. William Pocklington faced the wrath of Red Crow when an attempt was made to by-pass his authority by getting minor chiefs to accept the bacon. Crowfoot and Eagle Tail banned bacon from their reserves outright. Eventually, the plan to cut costs by replacing the beef with pork was revoked, and the beef was restored.²⁸

On June 4, 1884, Riel was finishing Sunday Mass at St. Peter's when Gabriel Dumont and a party of three others came to call. They had ridden overland 700 miles from Batoche, a half-breed settlement on the South Saskatchewan River, to seek his advice in the Metis' dealings with the Canadian authority. The delegation sought Louis Riel's perceived wisdom and education in dealing with their grievances with Sir John A. Macdonald's administration, over the issue of his government's non-recognition of their land claims. No one in power would listen to the Metis, and nobody in Batoche seemed to be able to speak the government's language. With the demise of the buffalo, the Metis of Batoche had learned to farm their lands in order to survive. But as in 1869, the federal government was once again up to its old tricks. Dominion Land surveyors were again dividing up the Metis' river lot land claims, with their checkerboard system of one mile square section grids. Immediately, land speculators filed legal claim to the newly surveyed sections, and Metis claims were tossed to the wind with little or no compensation. The situation provided Riel an opportunity to do what he enjoyed best, and that was political activism. With the Metis' troubles on the South Saskatchewan, all Riel's plans were ready.

Five days later, the returned leader packed up his family and left with Dumont's party fully intending to return by September. Of course, he never would. Gabriel Dumont and his party brought the revolutionary out of his exile to return to a people who saw him as a savior. Upon arrival, Riel set up a headquarters at Batoche's Crossing. Immediately, he began to lay plans for action against the government. To this end, he began to renew his alliances and make contact with several tribal leaders. The Crees - Poundmaker, Fine Day, and Big Bear - would eventually be drawn into the conflict. Other Native leaders from throughout Western Canada were contacted. But it was the leaders of the Blackfoot Confederacy that were seen as the force that could make a difference.²⁹

Before Riel could organize his native alliances however, he had to address the white and Metis settlers of Prince Albert, many of whom had helped finance his return. The Prince Albert people had a good many grievances against the government in relation to the poor prices offered for their farm commodities.³⁰

Indeed, most white farmers in the west saw a kindred spirit in Louis Riel and his fight with the government. Indeed, the government had barely avoided a farmer's revolt in 1883, when the Manitoba & North-West Farmers Union organized and threatened union with the United States.³¹ The feelings of the farmers and the Metis were quite

similar and were echoed by the words of the fiery Frank Oliver, who spoke in his *Edmonton Bulletin*

*If history is to be taken as a guide, what could be plainer than that without rebellion, the people of the North-West need expect nothing, while with rebellion, successful or otherwise, they may reasonably expect to get their rights.*³²

What turned the white settlers against Riel was his intention to ally his forces with the Indians. Frank Oliver changed his tune as though a switch had been thrown.

*Every effort should be made to meet the demand for dead Indians by a reasonable supply.*³³

The Blackfoot chiefs were growing ever more disillusioned by the reserve system, and were greatly tempted by Riel's offers of a new Republic. In late 1884 Big Bear sent a trusted ally, Little Pine, to the Blackfoot Reserve to invite Crowfoot to come north for a council with the Crees, and a proposal for a grand alliance on the Red Deer River. Crowfoot began to lose control of his tribe, as several warriors threatened to leave with Little Pine who took with him as a goodwill gift, five Blackfoot horses.³⁴



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19770154000

Ox-at-et-Pua, a Blackfoot warrior, circa 1885. Crowfoot had difficulty keeping his warriors from heading north to join the insurgents.

Despite Crowfoot's indecision, Red Crow wanted nothing to do with the Crees, his traditional enemies. The memory of Big Bear's 1870 attack on the disease-ravaged Blood camp near Fort Whoop-Up was still vivid in his mind. The white man was still Red Crow's ally, despite his problems with Pocklington and the Mounted Police. The police and the government had always dealt peacefully, despite the treaty disputes and the frequent arrests of tribesmen.³⁵ Red Crow's loyalty was again tested in the winter of 1884 when one of his most trusted chiefs interfered with an arrest. White Calf's son, Oral Talker had just returned from a horse-raiding expedition to the Cypress Hills. When White Calf protested, both father and son were thrown into the Fort Macleod guardroom. White Calf was kept overnight and released without charge. Red Crow, aghast that the redcoats would dare throw a leading Blood authority into jail, joined White Calf to demand the release of Oral Talker. While White Calf threatened to go to war with the police, Red Crow bided his time, and soon White Calf lost all support among the Bloods for his war.³⁶

On December 16, 1884, Riel addressed the grievances of Poundmaker, Big Bear, and the Metis. His Bill Of Rights, requested free title for the Metis land claims, fairer treatment of the Indians, provincial status for the Territorial Districts, local responsible government, and representation in Parliament. Sir John A. Macdonald ignored the pleas, and sought to wait the crisis out. In Regina, the new Territorial Capital, Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney also sought to wait out the winter, hoping that the season would tame the Metis' thoughts of revolt.³⁷ As the winter wore on, rumors and innuendo escalated the threat from a political fight to a military one. The NWMP had increased their strength to a total of five hundred and fifty men. Superintendent Lief Crozier commanded two hundred policemen, concentrated at Battleford, Fort Carlton, and Prince Albert, the area that would see the bulk of the fighting. On March 18, Commissioner Acheson Irvine pulled together ninety reinforcements from southern postings and marched out of Regina, bound for Prince Albert.

By now, Riel could see that the government intended to settle the business only with a show of force. As he had at Red River in 1869, Riel declared a provisional government and with the frontiersman Gabriel Dumont as his adjutant-general, prepared his people for war. As expected, the federal government refused to recognize Riel's government, seeing the declaration as an act of war. Soon, Militia forces were moved west from Ontario on the all but completed Canadian Pacific Railroad. Major-General Frederick Middleton was given command of all Canadian Militia forces in the North West Territories, and was ordered to Fort Qu'Appelle to set up a headquarters for assault.

On March 26, the situation finally came to a head. The week previous, Riel had ordered a "war of extermination" against his opponents, and ordered the police to abandon Fort Carlton and Battleford. Superintendent Crozier would not be cowed. He decided to settle the matter personally, and challenged Riel and Dumont on their own turf. Crozier assembled a brigade of 52 policemen and 43 armed volunteers from the Prince Albert community, and marched them down the trail to Hillyard Mitchell's trading store at Duck Lake. A mile and a half from the store, Crozier saw men moving on the ridges around his troop, and realized that he was surrounded and outgunned. Barricading themselves behind sleds, the police and volunteers readied themselves for battle while Supt. Crozier and a Scout, (Gentleman) Joe MacKay, rode out into an open field to meet with Isadore Dumont (Gabriel's brother) and an Indian named Assiyiwin. During their conversation the Indian grabbed MacKay's rifle, and whether on purpose or accidentally, the gun discharged into Assiyiwin's stomach. The ensuing battle took over half an hour, with the police and volunteers taking the heaviest casualties. Wounded, Crozier ordered a retreat to Carlton. Only the good grace of Louis Riel allowed Crozier to escape unharassed. The triumphant leader, brandishing a crucifix, ordered a cease-fire. The police-volunteer team was overwhelmed in the battle by the superior numbers of the Metis. In all, twelve men were killed and eleven were wounded. The Metis themselves lost five men.

By the 24th of March Irvine had reached Prince Albert, and the next day pushed on to Fort Carlton. Upon reaching Carlton on March 26, Irvine could scarcely believe the news he heard. His column was a day late to be of any use to Crozier. Realizing that Carlton was indefensible, he ordered a retreat to Prince Albert. In the midst of the evacuation the fort was set afire accidentally, and the force, together with Crozier's wounded, made their way to Prince Albert in the darkness.

News of the first conflict told of a resounding Metis victory. At Blackfoot Crossing, Crowfoot received word of the clash from Riel's messengers, who kept tribal leaders up to date on the events taking place. Often this unique system of message runners brought news to the Indian encampments faster than telegraph wires could send news to white settlements. In less than twenty four hours, both the citizens of Calgary and the people of the Blackfoot Reserve knew the outcome of the first battle of the North West Rebellion. No one could possibly know what might happen in the coming weeks, but nothing could ever again be the same.

When Louis Riel sought allies for a coalition stand against the Canadian government, he could not help but consider the unusual link between the Blackfoot leader, Crowfoot, and the Plains Cree

warrior chieftain, Poundmaker. Crowfoot was extremely fond of Poundmaker, and had made him his adopted son. Poundmaker had consolidated bands of Stoney, Assiniboine and Salteaux into a united Confederacy.³⁸ Riel understood that he might be able to use the relationship to his advantage.

Poundmaker rejected Riel, but before long the war councils of his minor chiefs revolted against him. After Duck Lake the hungry, anxious tribe looted the town of Battleford. When Poundmaker tried to stop the ensuing battle, fire was set to several buildings and the band retreated to the Cut Knife Hill area. His control eroded, Poundmaker attempted to further restrain his warriors. As the days went on, white settlers in the area were taken prisoner and cattle were stolen.³⁹ Poundmaker used the little power he had to dissuade his people from riding to Batoche to reinforce Riel and Dumont's troops. The messengers of Riel tugged at Poundmaker's ties to Crowfoot, and told wild stories of Blackfoot attacks in the south. The Metis even told stories of the U.S. Army riding to the relief of Batoche, but Poundmaker refused to believe any of it. What was certain was that a Canadian Militia column under Colonel William Otter was enroute to Swift Current, and would soon march north to engage the Plains Cree at Cut Knife Hill.



Glenbow Archives NA-1315-18

Louis Riel's Cree allies, Big Bear and Poundmaker. Big Bear tried unsuccessfully to prevent his warriors from initiating the Frog Lake massacre, and had to marshal his band into a fighting force that engaged General Strange's column at Frenchman's Butte and Loon Lake. Poundmaker, chief of the Battleford Cree, fended off the attack from Colonel Otter's column at Cut Knife Hill.

News began to filter from the north of trouble at a settlement called Frog Lake. The leader of the Cree tribes in the area, Big Bear, always had a keen suspicion of the motives of the police and the Hudson's Bay traders. He had signed Treaty No. 6, but grudgingly. Big Bear then refused to accept his reserve, putting the legality of the agreement in question. His aggressive attitude led to the deployment of five North West Mounted Policemen, commanded by Inspector Francis Dickens, at the nearby HBC post, Fort Pitt.⁴⁰ The Frog Lake settlement was a small village consisting of a Catholic church, log dwellings, a mounted police building, the HBC store and the Indian agency of Thomas Trueman Quinn.

Quinn and Big Bear fought often, and Quinn refused rations to Big Bear unless the Cree leader accepted his reserve. In October, 1884, the annual treaty payment ceremonies at Frog Lake very nearly led to war when Thomas Quinn refused Cree demands for fresh beef. A war dance, firing of weapons, and spoken threats ensued. Quinn finally acceded in part, and provided a steer for the ceremony. Big Bear agreed to accept his treaty payments, and violence was temporarily postponed.⁴¹ The trouble between Big Bear and Quinn was finally put to test, when Louis Riel's messengers came knocking, instigating trouble among the more unpredictable minor leaders such as Wandering Spirit. Among the rumors circulated was that Riel's Provisional Government had support from the U.S. Government.⁴²

On April 1, 1885, Frog Lake received word of the Battleford raids. The next day saw perhaps the most grisly episode in the history of the Rebellion. The next day, Wandering Spirit and two warriors entered the home of Thomas Quinn and pulled him out of his bed. Similar incidents occurred in other homes in the settlement that day, as weapons and horses were appropriated by the Crees. The Hudson's Bay store was entered, but trader, William Cameron had transferred most of the stock to Fort Pitt.⁴³ About ten men were ordered to Quinn's office, where Wandering Spirit yelled at Quinn, and let the agent know exactly who was in charge. He then had the men taken to the church, where the rest of the village citizenry had assembled. Big Bear was at the church, trying to gain control of the situation. Indeed, he had protected the HBC store from looting earlier. The white citizens and several Metis were in the church kneeling in prayer when Wandering Spirit broke in. The citizens were ordered out of the church and to the Indian Department buildings.⁴⁴

Before the night was over, Thomas Quinn was shot by Big Bear's son, Imasses. Eight others were also shot and killed, despite Big Bear's protests against the brutality. William Cameron and several others were spared their lives. Two white women were captured and dragged off to the Cree camps. Big Bear later apologized to the women for the warriors' actions. But Wandering Spirit and the others had taken a course from which there could be no going back.⁴⁵

In southern Alberta, Red Crow heard the wild stories of the Duck Lake, Battleford and Frog Lake incidents. Some of the tales were related by Joe Healy (the adopted Blood son of Johnny Healy) who understood English and as a police scout had heard all the news and rumors and lost little time in spreading the word. The Blood chief approached William Pocklington, and demanded to know the truth about what was happening.⁴⁶

While the Blood chief had no sympathy with Cree or half-breed complaints, there were no such guarantees with the younger crowd, who were itching for a chance to relieve their boredom. The young warriors saw the chance to establish their own war skills, and regain the glories that their elders spoke of.⁴⁷ Red Crow was losing control. The Blood reserve was within sight of the American border, and their former whiskey trade contacts could easily and willingly get ammunition for them.

On April 6, Pocklington and NWMP Superintendent John Cotton visited Red Crow and his council, to enquire as to his intentions. The tribal leaders informed Cotton, through interpreter Jerry Potts, that they had received gifts of tobacco, and messages from Riel, and from the Cree councils. The Bloods had refused the tobacco and sent the messengers away, indicating a refusal to join the insurrection. To further entice Blood neutrality, Pocklington opened the government's wallet and increased the band's flour rations.⁴⁸ Red Crow even refused a gift of tobacco from Crowfoot, so there could be no misunderstanding as to the Blood position of neutrality. The Blood war chief, White Calf used all his influence to cast off any notions of young warriors joining the Cree, and the Blood council offered Pocklington their services in fighting the Cree on the side of the government. The offer was considered by everybody, including the *Macleod Gazette*, Edgar Dewdney and Sir John A. Macdonald.⁴⁹

The smaller tribe of Eagle Tail's Peigans soon followed suit and proclaimed their neutrality. Both Blood and Peigans were traditional enemies of the Cree, and without Red Crow's support, there was little chance of the Peigans joining the Rebellion. One dissenter, Running Wolf, urged the Peigans to drop their plows in the fields and arm themselves for the next battle.⁵⁰ Nothing came of Running Wolf's plea and the Peigans continued to work on their 1885 potato crop.

From the time of the Duck Lake battle, Crowfoot's loyalties were not as clear cut as Red Crow's. He continued to welcome all Cree and Metis messengers into his camp, but always refused to smoke the tobacco given to him by the visitors. Rabble rousers continued to pour in, bragging about the many Metis-Cree victories occurring in the north, and how easy it would be to rid the prairies of the white menace. The agitators warned that if the Blackfoot refused to join the fray, the Northerners would consider them an enemy and attack the Blackfoot Crossing camp when they were finished with the militia.⁵¹

Early in April, rumours of a Blackfoot attack reached Calgary from a panic-stricken Langdon telegrapher. Father Albert Lacombe, accompanied

by frontiersman William Gladstone as interpreter, was summoned to approach Crowfoot and convince him to choose peace. On April 16, Crowfoot and 150 of his tribesmen met with Edgar Dewdney and Father Lacombe at the railroad station at Cluny.⁵² For the first time since Duck Lake, a government authority came to council with the chief. Dewdney was diplomatic, promised to deliver more rations to the Blackfoot, and offered military protection for Crowfoot's people, should they face Cree reprisals for not joining the rebellion. Crowfoot accepted these measures, and though he still had several grievances with the government, diplomatically chose not to discuss them with the governor. Crowfoot even offered to provide his own warriors for defense of the region against marauding Cree war parties, as the Bloods had done earlier. Dewdney resisted temptations to offer these fresh troops to the Alberta Field Force, not wanting to reignite the traditional Cree-Blackfoot wars.⁵³

At the end of the meeting Crowfoot dictated a telegram to be sent to the Prime Minister, pledging to reject involvement with Riel and the Crees, and remain obedient to the Queen. Messengers were sent to other tribes, urging them to remain neutral and solidifying the Blackfoot confederacy. The telegram was circulated to Governor-General Lord Landsdowne and Queen Victoria.⁵⁴ The message sent Crowfoot into the history books as a model of diplomacy and oration.

The inhabitants of southern Alberta now breathed easier, but relaxation of defenses could not be allowed until all hostilities had ceased. Major Stewart's organization of the Rocky Mountain Rangers had to be continued. Though southern Alberta's aboriginal tribes rejected Riel's overtures, there were still reports of marauding Gros Ventres and Assiniboine Indian bands in the Cypress Hills and Milk River Ridge country.⁵⁵ The Gros Ventre were a Blackfoot speaking tribe in Montana, who had camped and interacted often with the Assiniboine of Piapot and with Big Bear's Crees. Metis hunters loyal to Riel on both sides of the border, served to keep the pot stirred. The Assiniboine living in the Cypress Hills were also a question mark. In previous years, they had been a constant irritation for the Mounted Police. The Assiniboine also inhabited northern Montana, and in 1879 the U.S. Army built Fort Assiniboine at the mouth of Beaver Creek where it ran into the Milk River (near modern Havre) in order to keep an eye on border-jumping natives. In April 1885, Fort Assiniboine was put on alert after the Duck Lake trouble, and American cavalrymen patrolled the south side of the Medicine Line.⁵⁶

Propaganda and Paranoia on the Plains



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19770159000

Southern Alberta ranchers and a few top-hatted Lethbridge citizens gather for a photograph with Blood Indians, circa 1885 or later. The mounted natives in the rear may be Mounted Police scouts, as one wears a police issue overcoat and gauntlets.

In the history of armed conflict, one thing that is usually overlooked is the effect that the news of the first outbreak has on the average citizen. Some of us may remember the effect that word of Hitler's invasion of Poland or the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had on our lives. In more recent times we have had the Mohawk Crisis in Quebec, and the Gulf War with Iraq. When the bombings of Baghdad by the American-led coalition (of which Canada was a part) began, and even when the Canadian Armed Forces moved onto the Kahnatesake Reserve at Oka, all Canadians were filled with a sense of anxiety over what may happen in the near future. In January of 1991, the entire country was affected by events occurring thousands of miles away.

Well, let's transplant that kind of emotion back over one hundred years, to 1885, to a time when there is little or no communication with governing authority. The conflict did not occur a few thousand miles away across the ocean, but a few hundred miles down the river. The inherent threat was not some foreign power, but was the neighbor across the creek. Added to this was a mix of a changing landscape, a clash of cultures, an evident and official prejudice, remoteness of living, starvation, boredom, and a generous helping of gunpowder. The recipe for a general panic was complete.

Misinformation and fears were evident on both sides, native and white. For the whites, the Great Sioux Wars of Montana and the Dakota Territories

were a recent memory. Natives also remembered those times, and in many cases had been involved with them. Before the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the Blackfoot leader, Crowfoot had even been invited by Sitting Bull's Sioux to join their struggle against the U.S. Cavalry.¹

Everybody knew trouble was in the air, as soon as Louis Riel submitted his petition to the government in December of 1884. Sir John A. Macdonald had dispatched General Middleton to the west long before Duck Lake in anticipation of armed revolt. Indeed, Captain John Stewart had submitted his plan for the Rocky Mountain Rangers militia to the federal government before the battle of Duck Lake.²

On March 26, 1885 Superintendent Leif Crozier of the NWMP moved a force of police and volunteers to Mitchell's trading post at a settlement called Duck Lake, over which Riel, Gabriel Dumont and a large number of Metis and Indians had taken control. By the time Crozier withdrew, twelve of his men were dead and all of Canada had heard the rifle shots.

Crowfoot received word of the Duck Lake battle at his camp at Blackfoot Crossing, east of Calgary. Through a system of message runners, Riel tried to keep most of the Indian tribal leaders up to date on the events of the Rebellion, in hopes of inciting them to action. Often this "Moccasin Telegraph", as the

system was known, brought news to the Indian encampments faster than telegraph wires could send news to white settlements. White settlers were flabbergasted as to how results of battles fought hundreds of miles away could get to the Indian camps before police officers at Fort Macleod heard of it. Despite the swift horsemen riding dispatch between telegraph stations at Medicine Hat and Calgary, the natives always had the news first.³

In Calgary and Fort Macleod, word of Duck Lake was received with both apprehension and fear. Few doubted that the northern Cree would join the Rebellion, but the intentions of the southern tribes weren't known. The question of possible Blackfoot involvement in a rebellion had long been considered by the government and the military even before Duck Lake. The Oblate missionary Father Albert Lacombe was asked to intervene as a mediator on the government's behalf.⁴

Total numbers of combined Blackfoot, Blood, Peigan, Sarcee and Stoney were rumored to be over 5,000 warriors, but now it is generally believed this number was actually the total of Blackfoot speaking people.⁵ Native numbers were greatly exaggerated by citizens, either out of ignorance or to prompt government action. In truth, all tribes combined could probably not have mustered more than 200 warriors. Though the numbers were incorrectly reported, the fear among settlers, whether justified or not, was very real. As J.R. Craig noted, the ranche country was in the centre of the three most powerful Indian tribes of the North West, and white settlers were said by Craig to have been outnumbered ten to one.

At Calgary, a telegram was received from Militia and Defense Minister Adolphe P. Caron, giving command of forces in the Territorial District of Alberta to Major-General Thomas Bland Strange.⁶ Strange, a retired Royal Artillery officer, now operated the Military Colonization Company ranche near the Blackfoot Reserve east of Calgary. Thereafter all Alberta militias were to form the Alberta Field Force.

Frederick Ings of the Midway Ranche related an incident that occurred in Calgary at the onset of the Rebellion.

I had ridden into Calgary one Sunday on a big gray horse I called White Eagle, and I found the town in a state of excitement. That morning, while a service was being held for a new little church lately built, quite a bunch of Sarcees in war paint rode up as far as the hill tops overlooking the town. Here they circled around, making considerable noise and letting out fierce war whoops. Someone saw them and rushed to the church, where nearly the whole populace

was gathered, and shouted that the Indians were on them. The meeting broke up quickly and the people dispersed to arm themselves with what firearms they could find. The store was opened and the rifles and guns there were distributed among the men. There was talk of barricading the women and children in the barracks. The Sarcees, quite pleased with the commotion they had caused, rode away without entering the town. It was only a scare, but it showed what could happen if the town was surprised by a band really on the war path.⁷

When John Stewart (now officially gazetted as Major Stewart) arrived in Calgary on April 4, he found the town in a near-ridiculous state of panic. A telegraph operator at Langdon, (east of Calgary) had been sending panic-stricken wires into Calgary, warning of an approaching band of Indians.⁸ A scout was sent out, but nothing was found. Luckily, the report had been completely false, perhaps the result of an over-anxious telegrapher's imagination.

Calgary was ill-prepared for any kind of trouble. The Field Force was scarcely organized and General Strange awaited recruits still to come in from the area's ranches. There was a definite lack of leadership among town officials. This included displays of public drunkenness by the Mayor, John Murdoch, and other town officials. As well, ammunition supplied to the town's police did not match their weaponry. John Cottingham, a Calgary merchant took it upon himself to send a very lengthy telegram to Minister Caron on April 5. Part of the telegram described the Calgary situation as the following:

...much uneasiness is felt owing to scarcity of arms. I have with the utmost care examined everything I found in my moving about in some cases I have found centre fire rifles that were borrowed during excitement loaded with rim fire cartridges and vice versa. Many of the merchants carry stock of mixed ammunition which becomes badly mixed when issued to men as was the case at Calgary Sunday night. Chief Police Ingram of Calgary received a rim fire Revolver from Rogers & Grant loaded with Centre fire cartridge. If required to use the same it would have been serious for him, besides arms were placed in the hands of men and boys unfit for the duty assigned them. I am ashamed to admit, nevertheless it is true that some of our leading citizens were much the worse for liquor, Sunday night, those whom we looked to for advise and had the Indian scare been real there would have been serious work done. I am familiar with the doings of the Mayor, Council and a few more of Calgary's drunken beauties, they glory in telling news given to them in confidence, by Father Lacombe, in asking

*Comptroller White for power to barricade the barracks by building bastions and a thousand more foolish and unnecessary requests..*⁹

Amidst the fear one of Cottingham's "drunken beauties", controversial Mayor John Murdoch, appointed former Mountie and Calgary farmer James Walker to organize the Calgary Home Guards¹⁰ General Thomas Bland Strange arrived from his ranche and imposed military authority on Calgary and its Home Guard.

At Fish Creek, a settler's meeting brought an odd occurrence into the mix. Not only Metis and Indians had grievances. In fact, all the makings for a range war between ranchers and settlers were in place. At the head of the protest were two early frontiersmen of the Calgary area.

The *Calgary Herald* of April 9 reported a gathering of fifty disgruntled farmers at the residence of John Glenn, the meeting chaired by Sam Livingston. Both Glenn and Livingston were pioneers of the district, both having arrived in the area around 1865. Livingston stated that he had not been able to receive a title on his land, even though he had been on it nine years and had fulfilled all legal obligations. Glenn, when called on, gave a similar story, and gave assurance that he would guard his claim with deadly force if need be. The settlers maintained that the problem lay with the government who protected all titles on land for the purpose of holding grazing leases for large stock raisers, Indian reserves, school lands, and Hudson's Bay and CPR grants.¹¹ As the meeting progressed, the settlers speculated that the Dominion government refused to grant titles to farmers, in protection of its railroad and treaty obligations, and its friends in the ranching business.

Livingston and Glenn went on to relate personal accounts of how their stock had been driven off of lands claimed by the Cochrane Ranche that was not being used. Stories were told of newcomers forced to leave because land could not be found which was not taken up by one kind of reserve holding or another. Settlers threatened to leave their ranches and burn all improvements.¹² John Glenn stated.

*"...I will be compelled to burn my place and if I do I will not leave many ranches behind me."*¹³ Sam Livingston then declared. *"...all must either fight for our rights or leave the country and if I am compelled to leave, I will leave marks on the trail behind me."*¹⁴

At the end of the meeting, the gathering formed itself into the Alberta Settlers Rights Association. A telegram to be sent to Sir John A. Macdonald was drafted, embodying the spirit of the Association's resolutions, and calling for all lease lands suitable

for agricultural purposes to be thrown open for entry and settlement. The message ended with a resolution supporting the grievances of the Metis in the North West Territories. Two hundred settlers signed the petition.¹⁵ Now southern Alberta citizens, and ranchers in particular, faced a new threat as the homesteaders threatened to throw in their lot with the Indians and Metis in the revolt.

Ranchers at the High River crossing met to discuss protection of their range country. The need for construction of a fort was discussed, to provide safety for white women and children in the area, but this post never came about. An unnamed British veteran of the Indian Mutiny stood up bravely and bleated about *"how he would deal with these Indians."* A few days later when, a band of painted Sarcee came into High River, Fred Ings declared *"this brave chap was found hiding down a well."* Ings also stated that at a few of these meetings the "squaw men" (frontiersmen who had taken native wives) were scared, because they knew how the Indians were thinking.¹⁶

A Home Guard was organized at High River, and an "unofficial militia" unit was also put together. Fred Stimson, the flamboyant manager of the North West Cattle Company (later the Bar U) armed his cowboys too as "Stimson's Scouts".¹⁷ These Scouts included the black cowboy John Ware, a former slave from the Carolinas who rode the cow trails north, and would later become a successful Alberta rancher. Also along was a young Prince Edward Islander destined to become a Senator, Dan Riley.

The citizens of Macleod and area began to prepare for the worst. The main fort was reinforced. A smooth-wire fence was erected around the barracks, as there was no stockade at the new Fort Macleod barracks. The original Fort Macleod, on an island in the Oldman River, had been abandoned in 1882, and the new Fort was situated directly west of the modern town. Wooden blockhouses, or bastions, were constructed at opposite corners of the post to provide safe defensive positions in the event of attack.¹⁸

William F. Cochrane of the Cochrane Ranche, which had its southern range near the Kootenai River (near modern day Waterton), went to Macleod and came back with arms and ammunition for his cowboys. He had had a personal dispute with Red Crow over the boundary of his grazing lease and the Blood Reserve, and a lot of Cochrane steers had disappeared. Several of Cochrane's hands, like the Englishman Ernest Neale Barker soon left the ranche to enroll in the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Cochrane wrote to his father, Senator Matthew Cochrane of Quebec of the mounting tension.

"There is a great deal of uneasiness about the Indians, who it is expected may break out

any day. Riel's runners are in their camps, and it seems doubtful what they will do. Dunlop [ranch foreman] was at Stand Off Friday [April 3] and thought it looked a serious threat that he hurried home, and I went immediately into town and got some more rifles and ammunition, as we were not in very good shape here for any trouble. I got them at Bakers, so I will have a bill of theirs this month that will cover the \$75.00. We ought to make every effort to get more protection here from the Government. It has been taken for granted that we will never have any trouble with the Indians, because we have not had any yet. But we are sleeping on a volcano that may break out at any time, and there are enough Indians to clean us all up here before help came if they were minded. The Police have not enough men to give any help outside of Macleod and we will have to look after ourselves. It is not considered safe to be alone on the prairie now and if the halfbreeds have any success north we will be pretty sure to have troubles here."¹⁹

John R. Craig was the manager of the Oxley Ranche, which was now known as New Oxley, following a tumultuous corporate restructuring. On March 31, he returned to the New Oxley Ranche following a trip into Fort Macleod where he sent a cable to his superior, Alexander Stavely Hill, reporting news of the rebellion and its effects in the area. Craig wrote years later of the fear aroused by the Duck Lake battle in his book *Ranching With Lords And Commons*

*"Although the scene of conflict and the general uprising was several hundred miles from us in the Macleod District, yet we were in great peril if the rebels succeeded in even one engagement."*²⁰

The New Oxley was located on the trail between Fort Macleod and Calgary, and was used as a stopping house where couriers and travellers changed horses. On Sunday, April 5 an unnamed rider came into the ranche at full gallop, believing himself to be pursued by hostile Indians. Excited, he exclaimed.

*"Get your family away to Fort McLeod as soon as you can. The Blackfoot Indians have torn up the C.P.R. track for miles. They are all on the warpath."*²¹

Of course, no such destruction of the railroad had occurred, but this incident was a classic example of the fearful news that was being attributed to the Indians' activities. It seemed to the white citizenry that even one victory by the forces of Louis Riel's uprising would encourage the young men of the Indian tribes to take up arms.



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19770155000

A Fred Russell studio portrait of a Blood Indian, 1885, in front of a painted backdrop. The presence of the rifle and sheath knife contribute to the "aura of savagery" that photographers of the era tried to evoke in order to sell their works, even though weapons were often props. Russell set up his studio in Lethbridge late in 1885, and had previously worked in Regina, where he observed the Riel trial and had even come to know Riel personally.

Nonetheless, J.R. Craig heeded the rider's advice. Being too late in the day to send his family into Macleod, Craig drove his family to a cow camp five miles from the ranche house and distributed to his cowboys several Winchester rifles and ammunition, given to him by the NWMP for defense. The following day Craig drove his family into Macleod. On the trip in, the ranche manager's anxiety kicked into full gear once again.



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19770158000

Another Fred Russell portrait of a Blood warrior, and his wife, 1885, in front of a painted mountain backdrop. The man wears a Hudson's Bay capote, evoking the ties that natives had to the historic company, and how American traders used the distinctive Bay pattern to further their own trade. Again weaponry, this time a bow and a revolver, are used to add drama to the studio pose.

John Craig noticed a group of riders off in the distance heading toward them at a fast gallop, and in his fear, took them for Indians. The faster Craig drove the team and rig, the faster the "threat" rode, and changed their angle to cut the Craigs' wagon off. Finally, in anticipation of a showdown, Craig halted his team, grabbed his Marlin rifle and took aim. But before the stockman could fire, one of his daughters looked through a field glass and cried out: "Hold on, I think they are cowboys" Her observation turned out to be true. Three cowboys rode up to the wagon, and told how they had been acting as scouts for the NWMP, and were trying to intercept travellers on the Macleod-Calgary trail to

get the latest news from the north. Continuing along the trail, the Craigs met a Concord stagecoach (probably one of John Stewart's coaches) filled with wives of police officers, bound for safety at Calgary

At Macleod, Superintendent Cotton informed Craig that the story about the Blackfoot tearing up the CPR was untrue. At that point, John Craig, given his own anxiety and the inherent danger, did a very odd thing. He and his family left the relative safety of the fort, and proceeded south to check out the Oxley's operations on the Belly River near Standoff. There he found that his own cowboys had abandoned the Ranche there, from fear of attack by the Blood Indians. Staying one night in the deserted house, the family forded the Belly the next day, and carelessly drove through the Blood agency camp, and also found it near abandoned, seeing only a few Blood women and children. Craig swung north back to Macleod and stopped at the house of the Anglican missionary, Reverend John Maclean, but also found that he had gone. Arriving at Macleod, the Craig family were chastised for their recklessness, and found that most of the ranchers' families had been moved into the fort. John Craig did likewise.²²

J. R. Craig's foolhardy Ranche tour provided much needed information to the police. The fact that the Blood warriors and elders were not at their camp did much to increase the tensions among the people at Macleod. Conclusions were drawn as several days had gone by without any communication between the mounted police and the Blood Indians.

Blood band leader Red Crow, who actually commanded greater numbers than the much-celebrated Crowfoot, approached Indian agent, William Pocklington and demanded to know the truth about what was happening. Cree messengers had been to his camp, and the same type of hysteria that gripped the white settlers was also being felt by his own tribe. Many of the young warriors, bored and dejected by reserve life, chafed to go into battle. Tribal elders feared an extension of the same type of warfare that many natives had experienced in Montana.²³

Even so, the *Macleod Gazette* absolutely denied that citizens were seeking safety in the fort, stating that any trouble was spotty and that local residents had long learned how to deal with living among free roaming Indians. More than likely, editor Charles E.D. Wood, a former mounted policeman, had refused to publish any of the rumors and reports, not wanting to cause any more unnecessary alarm or give credence to wild, unsubstantiated stories.²⁴

Stewart plans for the defense of Alberta

At the time of the Duck Lake battle, John O. Stewart had been in Ottawa. It is unclear as to whether he just happened to be in the capital visiting his family, or if he had gone east for the express purpose of forming a militia unit to protect his ranche country.¹ At any rate, he apparently was aware of the threat of the Rebellion. Even before the battle at Duck Lake on March 26, 1885, Stewart rushed to the office of Minister of Militia & Defense Adolphe Caron.

With the personal recommendation of his political friend Sir John A. Macdonald, Stewart officially requested authorization to form a volunteer mounted militia in the southern part of the District of Alberta. Macdonald made mention of Stewart in his orders to General Middleton.

"Captain John Stewart, formerly commanding the Militia Cavalry, and a dashing young fellow, is now a ranchman south of Calgary. He is here just now and is to proceed west where he will raise a corps of Western prairie men cow-boys and others who can all ride and shoot. They will bring their horses and equipments, all but rifles."²

Having the experience of four years of ranching in the west, Stewart was able to convince Minister Caron of the need for a troop of cavalry comprised of men who actually lived and worked in the area. Fresh volunteers were required to supplement the NWMP at Fort Macleod, to take the place of the Mounties who would be expected to be called to the scene of the action. In addition, the troop would have the task of guarding a two hundred mile frontier between the Rocky Mountains and the Cypress Hills, and protect the cattle herds from thieves and rustlers, and keep an eye out for American Indians who were expected to join the Rebellion. Stewart's plan was filed on March 25, 1885, the day before the Duck Lake debacle. Caron accepted the militia troop based on conditions set out in the carrying out report submitted by Captain Stewart.

Ottawa March 25th, 1885

To the Honourable The Minister of Militia
Ottawa.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following Report as requested in private interview today with reference to the formation of a Mounted Force in the Southern District of Alberta, N W T

A Provisional Cavalry Force of the Strength of 150 Officers, Non-commissioned officers and Troopers can be formed in the District named, having as it's northern boundary, High River, it's Eastern, Medicine Hat and to Southern the International Boundary Line, of the above strength upon the following basis.

(1). Each officer non-com. Officer and Trooper to supply his own horse and horse appointments (Mexican) consisting of Bridle, Lariat, Saddle and Saddle blanket.

(2). The uniform of Officers to be that of an undress Cavalry Officer, supplied at their own expense. The uniform of non-coms and Troopers to consist of, during their provisional enlistment and whilst undergoing their preliminary Drill, of their own serviceable Western apparel, with perhaps some additional inexpensive distinctive equipment supplied by Government.

(3). The arms to consist of 1 revolver Mounted Police pattern or any other serviceable Revolver in their possession. One Winchester carbine or other serviceable Carbine or Rifle in their possession. 1 cartridge belt with knife attached (M.P. pattern) (A limited deficiency in Arms to be supplied by Government, but the conditions of enlistment to require them furnished by the men)

(4). Blankets 3 per man of N W.M.P weight and quality.

(5). Each officer non-com officer and Trooper to be allowed \$.50 per diem for rations (Camping utensils to be furnished by Government of the description and number required on the Trail.)

(6). The forage per horse to be allowed at the rate of \$.50 per day.

(7). The pay for horse to be at the rate of \$.75 per day.

(8). Pay of Officers to be that of the respective rank of Canadian Cavalry officer with extra allowance of \$.50 or Rations and \$.50 or Forage per day.

(9). The pay of non-com officers to be that of N W.M.P non-com officers, viz. Sergeant-Major \$1.50 Sergeant, \$1.00 and Corporal \$.90

(10). The pay of a Trooper to be that of N.W.M.P. Constable, or \$.75 per day. (The total cost of a Trooper horse, horse appointments, Arms, Equipment, Rations forage and pay being \$2.50 per man and horse per day with the proviso aforesaid that where Arms are totally deficient a draft will be allowed by Government.)

(11). The Government to be responsible for loss or destruction of those appointments during Provisional Service, and for the loss by death or stray of horses when established by Board of Officers to have been accidental and not due to neglect or carelessness, validation to be arrived at by said Board of Officers.

(12). Cavalry regulations to govern the Discipline and drill and the maintenance to be subject to the aforesaid conditions.

(13). If Quartered under Canvas, the prescribed number of tents to be supplied.

(14). The enlistment of Officers, Non-com. officers and men to be for a period of 30 or 60 days and during which time they will be subject to orders for Active Service for the period named, and additionally, subject to, and enlisted for if necessary, and received by Government for a further period of 9 months with the proviso that in the event of Active Service during the additional enlistment, the government will furnish necessary uniforms, Arms and General Equipment for the "trail" with transportation.

(15). The Officer in command to be permitted to enlist men of other than British Nationality (i.e. Western men of any class) to the extent of say 40, or one troop, provided he has knowledge of their capacity and faithfulness, and will be responsible for their Conduct and Discipline.

In recruiting the aforesaid Contingent it will be necessary to draw the men for Cavalry work and available for any emergency from Ranchers and their employees, a large number of whom are ex Mounted Police of 1 or 2 terms of service in the West together with Englishmen, Canadians & Montanans who have been living a nomadic life and whose home is in the prairie.

In tendering my services to my Country and Government to command a force of the nature above described and within the said Territory, I do so with full knowledge of the undertaking and with no fear [and show] successful results from my experiences in Cavalry work and of the country in which my duties will be required.

I have the honor to be.

J Stewart.³



Glenbow Archives NA-1847-2

Major-General Thomas Bland Strange was forced out of his ranching retirement to command the Alberta Field Force, a body consisting of several military regiments, including the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Before assembling the Rangers, Major John Stewart reported to Strange in Calgary to make the necessary plans to secure the southern Alberta region. Shortly after, Strange was ordered north to relieve Edmonton, and to take on the Crees of Big Bear at Frenchman's Butte and Loon Lake.

Minister Caron's office was immediately besieged with activity. The news of the outbreak of hostilities at Duck Lake rocked the capital, and on March 28, Caron replied to Captain Stewart's report:

Authority is given to raise four (4) troops of Rocky Mountain Rangers on basis and conditions contained in report submitted by Captain Stewart to me.⁴

Shortly thereafter, Caron wired General Middleton of his dispensation of forces.

*To Major-General Middleton
c/o Lt. Col. Houghton,
Winnipeg, Man*

One hundred men "A" Battery, one hundred men "B" Battery, -Five hundred men, Queen's Own & Tenth Royals, Eighty Toronto School under command Col. Otter. Total, -Seven hundred and Eighty, moving to front. Authorized Mounted Rangers under Capt. Stewart, -Have telegraphed Strange to report himself to you at Qu'Appelle.

A. P. Caron⁵

Of course, General Strange did not report to Middleton, and eventually was ordered to organize his own campaign. On April 29, John Stewart arranged for a telegram to be sent to his friend and partner in Macleod, Duncan J Campbell. The message was wired to Calgary and expressed to Macleod by Dominion Mail (the telegraph was yet to reach Macleod).

April 29th, 1885

*Duncan Campbell
Ft McLeod
Mail From Calgary*

I authorize you to open enlistment roll immediately for mounted force of rangers. any nationality accepted. up to 100. notify garnet to enroll at Pincher Creek. the saddles arms & horses of men may be required as far as they go by government & possibly required for active service. [call on] J Coughton [Cotton] NWMP & approximate number [of] available armed & mounted any description & approximate number available unarmed & with out saddles. Notify Herron & others to have mounts available.

J Stewart⁶

Stewart's comment "any nationality accepted" referred to the fact that he had been given special permission to authorize American citizens for service in the Canadian Militia. Stewart knew that American cowboys and frontiersmen accounted for a great deal of the population of the territory. Some were left over from the whiskey trade, some were herders who had remained in the area after delivering cattle herds to southern Alberta, and some had worked as freighters. Stewart was not going to miss the opportunity to take advantage of this resource. The "garnet" referred to in the letter was probably one of the Garnett Brothers ranching family of Pincher Creek. However no Garnetts show on pay lists or medal rolls of the Rocky Mountain Rangers.

Also, on March 29, Minister Caron wired the mayor of Calgary to advise him of Stewart's militia. Major General Frederick Middleton, now on his way to Qu'Appelle was also informed.

*To Geo. Murdock
Mayor
Calgary*

Your telegram was handed me by Sir John- Authority has been given to raise four troops in Alberta to Major-General Strange and Captain Stewart. I understand this will meet your wishes.

A. P. Caron⁷

*To Major General Middleton.
Qu'Appelle.*

Telegram about Boulton received-Think it is advisable for the present to enroll men furnishing their own horses and rifles. Strange on his way to Qu'Appelle and Stewart left to-night to organize four troops at Calgary. He says he can give you fifty mounted men in ten days. Troops being forwarded as rapidly as possible. Will send you Binocular Field Glass as requested. Artillery left last night. Otter leaves tomorrow. Wish you all possible success.

A. P. Caron⁸

John Stewart was on a westbound Chicago, Minneapolis & St. Paul Railroad train to Winnipeg on March 30, from Toronto. Riding with him was James K. Oswald, a failed Montreal businessman who was able to wrangle a military commission through the influence of his brother, Lt-Colonel W.R. Oswald, commander of the Montreal Garrison Artillery. James Oswald eventually became a Captain in Steele's Scouts.⁹ On the trip west, Stewart did not relax and his plans for the Rocky Mountain Rangers began to take shape while enroute. Stewart may also have brought with him two Militia officers from Ottawa, William Powell and Edward Gilpin Brown, to assist him as officers in the Rocky Mountain Rangers.¹⁰

From Toronto he wired Colonel Walker Powell, the Canadian Militia Adjutant General, of the need for 150 mounted police pattern revolvers.¹¹ From Chicago, Stewart ordered from Ortmeyer and Sons. Sixty Mexican-style saddles, at \$25 each, bridles and halters at \$3 each, and five dozen Mexican style spurs, and arranged to have them expressed to Winnipeg.¹² The fact that Stewart ordered these horse appointments when his militia's general orders stated that all volunteers were to provide their own horse and tack, indicates that Stewart may have had some doubt as to how many troops he could actually raise that would be able to provide their own mounts.

From Clearwater, Minnesota, Stewart attempted to confirm with the Defense & Militia department the expenditure for these items. His telegram from Clearwater makes it apparent that Stewart was unclear as to whether he had complete command of militia forces in the southern Alberta district, and whether arms and ammunition would be provided to him.¹³

At Winnipeg, Major Stewart took delivery of the saddlery and tack from Chicago, and waited for the equipment to catch up to him. While in Winnipeg, Stewart received a wire from Minister Caron, advising him that he was to provide his own arms and equipment.¹⁴ The spirit of the telegrams

indicates that Caron evidently had not read the Carrying-Out Report closely. Stewart referred the Minister to Section 14 of his report, wherein provisions had been made to provide for emergency requirements.¹⁵

Caron also told him that his department had refused all applications from other parties to form militias in the same area. At that point, Captain Stewart became Major Stewart, and assumed full command of the force he had ordered Duncan Campbell to raise at Macleod. Stewart received confirmation from the Defence department of his command of the Rocky Mountain Rangers on April 2,¹⁶ and was ordered to report to his commanding officer, General Thomas Bland Strange of the Alberta Field Force, in Calgary.

Also at Winnipeg, Stewart purchased, possibly at his own expense, a quantity of arms and ammunition, including several Winchester .45-75 rifles.¹⁷ The Winchester Model 1876 .45-75 had been used for a number of years by the NWMP as their primary weapon. Their original rifle, the Snider-Enfield .577, was cumbersome and a single shot weapon, making it outdated for use on the prairies. The '76 was a variation on the company's earlier success, the Winchester '73 .44-40. The '73, however, was a short range weapon, not effective beyond 150 to 200 yards.

In the United States, starting in 1873, the government provided its soldiers with .45-70 centrefire cartridges, and Winchester was forced to come up with an effective long range repeating rifle for this ammunition in order to maintain government contracts. The Model '76 was unveiled at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. The new rifle was similar to the Model '73, with parts made stronger and heavier to accommodate the heavier ammunition. The Model '76 was soon a favorite of the mounted police and was the official weapon until 1914.¹⁸

On April 6 Superintendent John Cotton, NWMP post commander at Fort Macleod, raised the issue of the defense of the region when he sent a dispatch to General Strange requesting at least two hundred and fifty infantrymen to relieve Macleod and Pincher Creek. Cotton also asked for 100 mounted men to replace the few police left at Macleod.¹⁹

Of course, this letter played directly into the hands of Major Stewart, who arrived in Calgary enroute to Macleod. On April 7, Strange and Stewart forwarded Cotton's message to Minister Caron, together with their own request for 100 Winchester carbines and 10,000 rounds of ammunition for the defense of the Macleod region.²⁰ The message was not lost on Caron, who had vacillated on spending government funds for

Stewart's corps. Caron's response was clear and the armaments were immediately promised.²¹

In the ensuing days, Strange worked feverishly to organize the Field Force, but the arms Caron promised did not arrive. Caron kept sending wires that he would send the rifles and ammo,²² but they did not arrive. On April 9, Strange threw his hands up and wrote the following threat, backed up by Stewart's Carrying-Out Report and the fact that his troops had not been authorized, while Stewart's had.

To Hon. A.P. Caron,

From Calgary NWT 9th,

One troop is enrolled for General Service another is being enrolled for Local service The conditions for both being those to Capt. Stewart. If you decline to furnish arms and equipments, please let me know at once I will send you statement of expense already incurred and disband the corps as soon as paid. Part are now guarding the Railroad at Gleichen, the rest at Calgary, I have sent you telegram with my answer to General Middleton.

T.B. Strange²³

Caron could not afford to dispense with a man of Strange's caliber, or the disbanding of a force so close to the Blackfoot reserve. He immediately authorized the troop, but the Winchesters still took time in arriving, and Calgary area troops had to suffer with the Sniders.

John Stewart only raised three companies of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. However, all early documentation, general orders, telegrams, and newspaper accounts indicate that he and the government originally planned for four companies.²⁴ Caron's telegrams and Stewart's carrying out report confirm this. Articles in the April 11, 1885 edition of the *Macleod Gazette* suggest that, for at least a little while, the "lost company" of the Rocky Mountain Rangers did exist in Calgary, while the Macleod and Pincher Creek companies were still recruiting. A dispatch from Calgary published in the *Gazette* presented this curiosity:

Our volunteer movement has culminated in the formation of the Mountain Rangers, with Major Hatton as Acting Captain, Lt. Lauder as first [lieutenant], and H. B. Strange, son of the General, as 2nd subaltern [2nd lieutenant] T. H. Dunne, formerly of the N.W.M.P., is acting Sergeant-Major and your correspondent, besides acting as Orderly Room Clerk is attached to the staff.²⁵

Evidently, militia fever had caught on in Calgary. The troop organized by Major Hatton, and overseen by General Strange was calling itself "the Mountain Rangers". The article indicates that Major John Stewart was in Calgary at this time, so this troop of Rangers may have met with his approval. While Duncan Campbell and John Herron were raising troops in the south, General Strange sent the Calgary unit on its first maneuver. Hatton and 18 men left on a special train to protect frightened CPR workers on the 18th siding at Gleichen. Another 18 garrisoned Fort Calgary, and total strength was expected to number 80 men, besides officers when enlistment closed.²⁶



Glenbow Archives NA-670-5

A re-touched photograph of a Ranger whose identity has been lost to time. But the image is typical of the style of clothing worn by most Rangers. Crude but functional cowboy gear were the norm, including leather fringed chaps for leg protection, bandana for shielding face from dust while riding in column or during storms, and the ever-present Stetson for head protection. The hat also identifies the Rangers' one and only concession to military dress code. The upturned brim on the right-hand side would signify their affiliation as a unit of the Canadian Militia. The unknown cowboy also displays the Rangers' weapon of choice, the Mounted Police pattern 1876 Winchester .45-75, as well as a Colt pistol tucked into his chaps.

But the next edition of the *Gazette* brings evidence that a Calgary troop of Stewart's Rangers was not to be. The Calgary unit was not to be named as, or be a part of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. The men remained together for service, but were henceforth named as "The Alberta Mounted Rifles", with Hatton, Lauder and Dunne remaining in command.²⁷ Harry B. Strange would serve as his father's Aide-De-Camp in the Alberta Field Force.

After ascertaining the situation in Calgary, Stewart left for Fort Macleod to survey the formation of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Though he was now officially a Major, the eastern Press still insisted on referring to "Captain Stewart's Cowboy Corps".²⁸ Stewart warned the general populace to prepare for the worst. William Cochrane, moved to protect the interests of his rancho and his company. In a letter to his father in Quebec, he doubted Stewart's ability to put together a regiment.

*I suppose you are all pretty anxious about [us] here. I do not think we will have any trouble with our Indians but will do everything to be prepared. If there should be an outbreak it would be impossible to hold the ranch on account of position, and the amount of hay stocked here, but Dunlop does not intend to connect himself with the militia or anybody, but get all the men he can from across the line if necessary, hiring them as cowboys, and act independently in the interests of the company. We have our horses here in the pasture ready for anything that may turn up...I do not believe Capt. Stewart will be able to raise much of a corps here.*²⁹

With the aid of over a hundred young horsemen Captain Stewart would, in a couple of weeks, come to prove the pessimistic William Cochrane wrong.

Call to Arms Personalities that made up the Rangers



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 404.14

At Fort Macleod, a group of unidentified North West Mounted Policemen and Rocky Mountain Rangers pose with their issued Winchester rifles, Model 1876 .45-75.

The history of the Rocky Mountain Rangers is much more than the events surrounding their formation and activities. The individuals who made up the roll call were truly a microcosm of the times. One, Kootenai Brown, has even become the subject of countless articles, at least three biographies and even a motion picture. But any one of the Rangers could truly stand out as a character indicative of the times of the early Canadian west. While not all the Rangers have been able to have their personal stories documented, the ones that have been found have proven to be very interesting.

As enlistment opened in 1885, many of these volunteers turned out to lend their services. Before leaving Ottawa, Major John Stewart sent a telegram, (telegraphed to Calgary and mailed to Fort Macleod) dated March 29, to Duncan Campbell in Macleod, and told him to begin making

arrangements for the organization.¹ This included an advertisement in the *Macleod Gazette*, requesting volunteers for the new regiment.² Stewart authorized Campbell to open enlistment for a mounted force of one hundred Rangers, possibly to be required for active service, and ordered him to notify his ranche manager, John Herron, to have mounts ready. By the time Stewart arrived from Ottawa, enlistment had begun and the Rocky Mountain Rangers were born.

On April 9, after reporting to General Strange in Calgary to receive his orders, John Stewart left for Macleod and immediately began to recruit volunteers for the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Response was brisk. Besides the Rangers, Stewart was responsible for organizing Home Guards in Pincher Creek and Macleod, and several of the enlisted Rangers served in both the Rocky Mountain Rangers and in the Home Guards.

The rolls were made up of mostly rank-and-file cowboys who were working stock hands from the Stewart, Cochrane, Oxley, and Waldron ranches. Probably a typical example of the style of rangehands that signed on as Rangers could be summed up by a Trooper named **James F Stock**, better known as "Alberta Jim". Stock was of unknown nationality, but was probably an American. Alberta Jim was convicted on September 27, 1884, of being illegally in possession of liquor (hardly an uncommon crime in those days of "enforced" prohibition). He was fined \$200, which he did not pay, and Jim spent the next six months at hard labor in the Fort Macleod guardhouse.³

In fact, several of the Rangers were Americans and Major Stewart was forced to ask permission from the Militia department to allow recruitment of American citizens for Canadian Militia service. Even though the cattle industry in southern Alberta was dominated by investors from Ontario, Quebec and Great Britain, among the hired hands who accomplished the real ranche work were many American cowboys. Most of these Americans had driven the herds into the country, working for outfits that had contracted to the new owners of these spreads to supply them with initial stock. Other Americans were leftovers from the days of the Montana whiskey trade incursions onto sovereign Canadian soil. Rangers hailing from the U.S. would include:

Missourian **William Allen Hamilton** had military experience in the U S Civil War as a cavalry veteran. He'd worked as a prairie teamster and the Rangers would need transport wagons to carry supplies to Medicine Hat.. Hamilton also had a more personal interest in the goings-on at Duck Lake. His wife was a Metis lady named Verny Marie Dumont, the adopted daughter of Gabriel Dumont, Louis Riel's second-in-command. William Hamilton came to southern Alberta by way of the Deep South and the Missouri River

Born in a covered wagon in Princeton, Missouri in 1845, Hamilton joined the Union Army during the American Civil War in 1864, and fought as a member of the 6th Missouri Cavalry. After the war, 'Billie' Hamilton moved into Arkansas, and took a homestead, but for some reason did not stay long in that state. He was, however, stuck with the nickname, Old Arkie.

Bill Hamilton came to Fort Benton sometime in the late 1860s or early 1870s, and went into the employ of the I. G Baker Company as a driver of the massive bull teams that freighted goods into Canada from the U.S. Hamilton was the first teamster to deliver a load of supplies for the NWMP to Fort Macleod in October of 1874. Eventually, Billie took out a homestead south of the Porcupine

Hills and freighted throughout the Alberta District for over ten years, until the railroads began to cut into the bull team business.

In 1883, Hamilton married the adopted daughter of the Metis leader, Gabriel Dumont. Verny Marie Dumont was born at the Red River settlement, but lost her birth parents as a child. She was taken in by Gabriel and his wife Madeline and raised as their own daughter. Some accounts refers to her as Annie. The family remembrance written for the Pincher Creek local history book also says she was "*a nurse in the Riel Rebellion*", but nothing else supports the claim. The two were married at the St. Albert Convent outside of Edmonton in 1883. The same accounts state Hamilton "was hired by the NWMP as a scout during the Riel Rebellion.", but medal rolls and pay lists show him as being a member of the Rocky Mountain Rangers.⁴

A man named **Charles Wachter** may have been the son or a brother of an ex-whiskey trader named Fred (Dutch) Wachter, who founded Fort Standoff in 1871, along with Joseph Kipp and John (Liver Eating) Johnson.⁵

John Rogers Davis, was an American settler who was said to have farmed and irrigated in California and Mexico. Born on May 29, 1862 at Hoyleton, Illinois, Davis was the son of a minister. Little is known of his adventures in California, or why he and his brother Samuel Hopkins Davis came to Montana to haul bull team freight from Fort Benton. In 1884, he filed for a homestead just east of the present town of Coalhurst, and across the river from the modern site of Hardieville. Besides developing this ranche, Davis continued to haul provisions to the Blood Indian agency and lumber to Fort Macleod.⁶

Other Americans have proven difficult to find any information about. John Higinbotham wrote that many of these Rangers had been U.S Army veterans of the Dakota Indian Wars. This is entirely possible, but little primary evidence has been located thus far to support the theory.

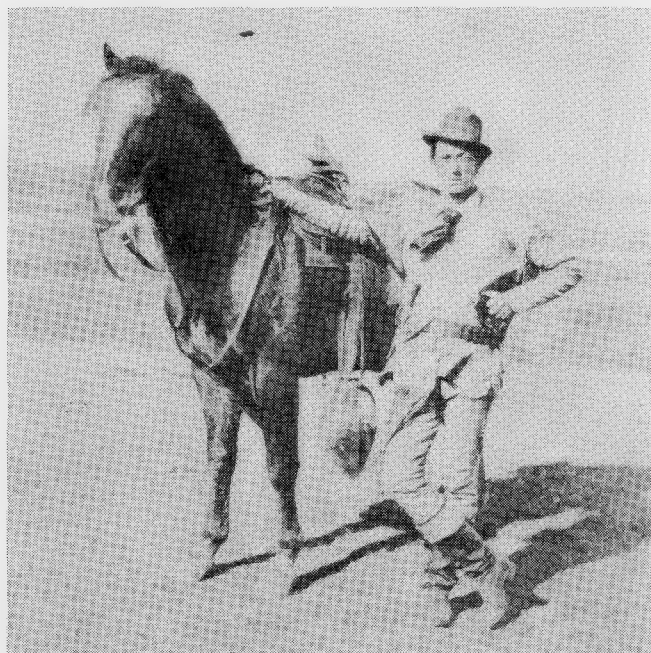
Several ex-mounted policemen, now working as ranchers and cowboys also joined the Rangers. Many of these men had established or had been posted to the NWMP Remount Station where the Stewart Ranche was now operating.

William Reid joined the NWMP on May 29, 1875 (Reg No 102), and helped found the Remount Station in 1878. He was discharged on May 22, 1884.⁷

Peter McEwen was living in Perth, Ontario when he enlisted in the force (Reg. No. 233) on June 5, 1877. McEwen was immediately posted to Fort

Macleod, and went to the Remount Station in 1878, often serving as Police Teamster. Discharged on June 5, 1880, he homesteaded near Mountain Mills on the south fork of the Oldman River.⁸ While in this region, he met and married Mary Gladstone, the Metis daughter of William Shanks "Old Glad" Gladstone, the ex-Hudson's Bay carpenter who built Fort Whoop-Up. The McEwens had several children, but only three boys survived infancy. Besides ranching, Peter McEwen did some freighting work between Pincher Creek, Medicine Hat and Fort Benton.⁹

James H. Schofield had become a fixture in Pincher Creek, and his police experience, as well as his relationship to the Stewart Ranche insured his appointment to the Number Three Company. Born in March 1858 in Durham, Ontario, of United Empire Loyalist and Scottish immigrant parents, his family moved to Brockville when Jim was very young and he took his early education there. Expelled from the Public School at the age of eleven for fighting with a teacher, young Jim worked as a delivery boy for a Brockville grocery store. At 14, he went to work in an uncle's hardware store in Mount Forest, Ontario. Soon after, he moved to Montreal and worked in the Henry Morgan & Co. department store. In 1876, he returned to Brockville and became a bookkeeper for the James Hall Glove Company.



Glenbow Archives NA-1602-6

James Schofield, a clerk from Brockville, Ontario, was recruited by Supt. James Walsh and entered the North West Mounted Police in 1878. Serving at Fort Walsh during the Sitting Bull affair, Schofield appears here in "mufti", the buckskin clothing preferred for prairie patrol duty. Discharged in 1881, Schofield freighted goods for the CPR and worked as a cowboy before opening a mercantile business in Pincher Creek. In 1885, he had call to once again bring out the buckskin uniform when he was named a Sergeant in the Rocky Mountain Rangers.

Another Brockville native, Inspector James Morrow Walsh had returned to Ontario to seek out 100 recruits for Mounted Police duty in the west. Walsh accepted Schofield's application and admitted him to the Force June 17, 1878. He trained and served at Fort Walsh, Fort Macleod and Fort Calgary, until his discharge June 30, 1881. At Fort Walsh, Schofield was one of many patrolmen charged with keeping the peace among the warlike Sioux, now camped on Canadian territory following their victory over Custer at the Little Bighorn. After leaving the force, Schofield accepted a contract, together with Sam Sharpe, to deliver a herd of cattle from the Conrad Brothers Circle Ranching Company to the Blood Indian Reserve. Later, he took a job as a cowboy on Captain Stewart's ranche.

Seeing opportunity with the advance of the CPR, Schofield went into business with a man named MacDonald fulfilling contracts to deliver supplies for the railroad, making several trips from Fort Benton to the ever-moving end of track between Medicine Hat and Calgary. In 1882, he was cut off from the CPR when the Belly River rose and prevented crossing. Undaunted, Schofield changed his line of work and sold his goods at Fort Macleod. With cash in hand, the canny merchant took up residence in Pincher Creek and became a leading businessman in the town, opening the town's first store in partnership with Henry Ernest Hyde. With mounted police experience, he was named a Sergeant in the Rocky Mountain Rangers upon enrollment.¹⁰

John Henry Gresham Bray was a former Chief Constable in the NWMP (Sergeant-Major), now discharged and turned to farming. Born January 24, 1840 in Dewdley, Worcestershire, England, at eighteen, he enlisted in the British Army and served ten years with the 10th Royal Hussars. With the 10th Bray went to India in 1858 and was ordered to China in 1860, but did not arrive there due to a cholera outbreak and was shipped back to England. In the early 1860s, Bray's unit was sent to Ireland to deal with the Fenian Rebellions. While there the 10th worked with the Royal Irish Constabulary which would later become the model for the NWMP. In Ireland, Bray was wounded by sniper fire and sent back to England with a shattered ankle. He served two years on the staff of Prince Edward of Wales, and in his final three years in Britain, Bray was a drill instructor at the Staffordshire Yeomanry.

After discharge, he moved to Toronto, and in October of 1873, was recruited for the NWMP, Regimental #92, with the rank of Chief Constable of "C" Troop. Following the NWMP's march west, Bray was posted to Fort Macleod. In 1875, he was re-assigned to Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills. A year later he married Jeminma McKay, the daughter of Metis settler Edward McKay. In March of 1877, the

Brays' daughter Flora was born, the first child born to an active member of the force. In 1879, John Bray was appointed as the first judicial Sheriff west of Winnipeg, and spent much time travelling the prairies to perform court duties, as well as maintaining his rank in the Police.

In 1879, the Force suffered its first murder when Constable Marmaduke Graburn was gunned down west of Fort Walsh. Upon investigation, a Blood Indian, Star Child was suspected, but was not apprehended until 1881. On October 18th, Star Child was brought to trial at Fort Macleod, and Sheriff Bray who was appointed by the court, was given the task of summoning an impartial jury, so as to show the Blood tribe that one of their own could be given a fair trial under Dominion authority. Star Child was eventually acquitted by the jury for lack of evidence.

In late 1881, Chief Constable Bray was ordered to take charge of the NWMP's Remount Station at Pincher Creek, and he became known to his men as "Turkey Legs" Bray. Discharged from the force at Fort Walsh on November 3, 1882, Bray took his Police land grant near Pincher Creek, and he and his growing family raised horses with the "HB" brand, as well as raising crops of garden vegetables. John Bray's extensive military and police experience was called forth again when he joined Captain Herron's Number 3 Troop of Rocky Mountain Rangers.¹¹

Charles Kettles enlisted in the police force on June 7, 1876 as a Sub-Constable (Reg. No. 184) and was discharged on June 14, 1879. Born near Ottawa in 1851, his biographers in the Pincher Creek history book, *Prairie Grass To Mountain Pass*, identify him as a nineteen year old, having served in the militia during the Fenian Raid of 1870. Six years later, Kettles joined the NWMP and was posted to Fort Walsh and Fort Macleod. He was present at the signing of both Treaty No. 6 at Fort Carlton and Treaty No. 7 at Blackfoot Crossing. In 1878, he came to Pincher Creek to help establish the Remount Station. Upon his discharge, Kettles became the first Indian Agent on the Peigan reserve, a position he held until the fall of 1882. In that year, Kettles returned to Ottawa to marry Elizabeth Anderson, and they returned to Pincher Creek in the spring of 1883. Like so many other early Pincher area ranchers, he took up land west of the town and began raising cattle. Charles Kettles was responsible for organizing the first school in the area, and undertook to hire Arthur Edgar Cox to come west to run it.¹²

Ed Larkin was a brief member of the NWMP, and worked on the Remount farm.¹³

George Canning Ives had a brief career with the North West Mounted Police, but his contribution to

the Pincher Creek area is phenomenal. Born in Compton, Quebec in 1849, Ives enlisted in the force in Montreal, and was engaged at Toronto on June 9, 1879. He served at Fort Walsh and was discharged at his own request at Fort Macleod on October 10, 1880.¹⁴ In that year he and a fellow ex-mountie, Sam Sharpe, took over the management of the government cattle herd at Pincher Creek. In 1881, he sent for his wife and their two small children, Nellie and William, they settled west of the town.¹⁵

Charles G. Geddes was Ives's ranching partner and a brother to the Geddes who were running range cattle near the Highwood River. He was also in a partnership with a man named Brunskill.¹⁶

Alfred Lynch-Staunton was a founder of the Remount Station and would become the progenitor of a proud family ranching tradition. The Lynch-Stauntons have one of the richest histories in western Canada, and the Antelope Butte Rancho they founded in the 1880s is still run by the family. Descendants have become Judges and Lieutenant-Governors. The Lynch-Staunton family name originated in Ireland, where the family patriarch, Francis Hardwick Lynch-Staunton, born in 1828, was supposedly thrown out of the country. Why is not clear, but it is said rather tongue-in-cheek, that the exile was "for the good of Ireland." But Ireland's good riddance was Pincher Creek's gain. Settling down in Hamilton, Ontario, Francis raised 12 children. The family grew up poor. Only one son, George, ever gained an education but would eventually become a Senator.

Alfred Lynch-Staunton enlisted in the NWMP, Regimental #241, on June 11, 1877 at Port Arthur (Thunder Bay), his oath of allegiance signed by Commissioner James Macleod. The official file shows his age at enlistment as 19 years, but his family claimed him to be seventeen. Evidently, he had lied about his age in order to go west as a mounted policeman, and was stationed at Fort Macleod. The next year, 1878, Lynch-Staunton was one of eight founding policemen of the NWMP Remount Station, under Inspector Albert Shurtliffe. In fact it was Lynch-Staunton who related many of the details of the Station's operation in a manuscript, which was often reprinted in the years after his death, most notably in the April 1950 edition of the RCMP Quarterly. It reads.

From 1874 to '78, the people, consisting of Indians and a few traders, became fully aware of the law in the form of the Mounted Police. Orders were issued at Fort Macleod to establish a police farm and detachment on Pincher Creek. With no idea how it was to be done, eight of us set out from Macleod and this trip was not as it is now. There were no roads, no fences, no bridges, and only one ranch, at the mouth of the

Pincher Creek, which belonged to Lee. All around us stretched the prairie, a sea of grass reaching to our stirrups. Ahead wandered our 200 head of horses and behind came the wagons and implements. The whole country swarmed with duck, [prairie] chicken, antelope, and deer. The nearest railroad was the G.T.R. [Grand Trunk Railroad] ending at Sarnia, Ont., and the Union Pacific in the U.S. It was not till we crossed Freeze-out Flat and Ridge, that we saw the land of our endeavors. It was not called Freeze-out then. Some years after, Dave Grier, a gentleman named Scotty, and myself had a supply of hay on the flat for the Police in Macleod. I was in Macleod getting supplies when a bad storm came up. I managed to make the shack before I found Scotty and Grier almost frozen. We had to stay the night but the next morning we left for Pincher Creek with the Christmas supplies for the police- groceries and a cheering liquid not subject to frost. Before we left, we tacked a board, with "Freeze-out" written on it, to the door of the shack, thus it was named. Pulling into Pincher Creek in the year 1878, we turned the horse herd out to graze on the flat below what is now the town and we proceeded to build the barracks which was a fine structure in those days a log shack with a sod roof and a dirt floor being the accepted habitation. Our work was to police the country from the boundary line to the Porcupine Hills and west to the Rockies, to raise horses for the Force and to keep our buttons shined.

Lynch-Staunton took his discharge on June 5, 1880, and began one of the first ranches near Pincher Creek with fellow ex-policemen James Bruneau and Isaac May. Both had joined the police force and retired from it on the exact same days as Lynch-Staunton. A small herd of 20 cows was purchased from a ranche owned by the ex-Constables' former commanders, Shurtliffe & Winder. Milk and beef were hauled and sold to citizens in Macleod from the novice ranchers' operation. In the early 1880s, Alfred made a trip to the Cypress Hills to meet with his father and kid brother, Richard, working for the Dominion Land Survey. In a few years, Alfred would greet his brother again, this time on the ranche to stay. With 50 cents in his pocket, Richard joined his brother in the ranche, and began the cattle dynasty that still exists today. Alfred Lynch-Staunton married Sarah Mary Blake in 1890, sister of a North Fork rancher and sometime artist.¹⁷

Samuel James Sharpe, was born in County Clare, Ireland, in May of 1850, (or 1853, as another source quotes) and was one of the original members of the North West Mounted Police. Having enlisted on March 28, 1874 at the age of 24, the records (Regimental No. 206) list his previous occupation as a labourer. Sam Sharpe came west as a Sub-

Constable with Company C and was posted at the newly-established Fort Macleod. Sharpe was greatly impressed with the foothill country, and upon his resignation from the force went into business in a ranching venture with Jonas Jones, a friend of John Stewart's. The two took out a grazing lease between the South and Middle Forks of the Oldman River.¹⁸

James W. Carruthers, had had a short term with the force. Born in 1849, Carruthers joined the NWMP on June 7, 1881 and served his term at Fort Macleod, until he was invalided out on June 22, 1881. He listed his intended residence as Toronto, but stayed and moved to Pincher Creek.¹⁹

Stewart's old friend, (**Honest**) **John Herron** was commissioned a Captain in the Dominion Militia Cavalry in charge of the No. 3 Troop of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Herron had been Stewart's sergeant-major in the Guards and was no stranger to military life, or to the tempestuous life on the western Canadian prairies. Born November 15, 1853 in Ashton, Upper Canada, twelve year old John went to work in logging camps, and at sixteen was taken to apprentice with a local blacksmith. Herron enrolled in the NWMP November 24, 1874 as a farrier Regimental No. 378., and spent the winter patrolling the town of Winnipeg.

That spring, the force was visited by Major-General Edward Selby-Smyth, as he made an inspection tour of the western outposts. The general required a special escort and John Herron was one of several policemen selected. Fifty men accompanied the General as they travelled to the Metis camp at St. Laurent, Fort Saskatchewan and the Red Deer River crossing. The tour met up with the F Troop of Inspector Ephram Brisebois and went south with the troop to build a new post, Fort Calgary. Herron continued with the General's party ending up at Fort Walla Walla, where Herron was released from the tour, and given three hundred dollars in gold for his return expenses to Fort Calgary.

Herron spent the next three years as a member of F Troop at Fort Calgary. As a member of the Calgary detachment, he was present at the signing of Treaty No. 7 at Blackfoot Crossing. John Herron completed his duties with the force in May of 1878, and returned to Ottawa, where he went into a wholesale liquor and grocery business. In the fall of 1878, Herron joined the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, as did his partner Tom Bates. The same year, Herron married Ida Lake.

In 1881, Herron accepted a commission from the Police to deliver over one hundred horses to various forts for the tour of Governor General Marquis of Lorne. On completion, Herron stayed in the west and became the manager of the Stewart Ranche Cattle Company. Herron and Stewart's

partner, James Christie, helped form the South-Western Stock Growers' Association. While the ranche fulfilled government beef contracts for Indian reserves, Herron devoted much time to breeding Clydesdale horses, and imported several stallions. In 1882, Herron brought his family to Pincher Creek.

In the fall of 1883, area settlers had an encounter with natives and stray cattle, when a cowboy riding along the Waterton River found a group of Stoney Indians field butchering a fresh beef carcass. A group of volunteers led by John Herron sought out the perpetrators, arrested them and took them to Fort Macleod, where they were tried and a few given two-year sentences.

Despite his respected reputation, John Herron retained a certain amount of "blue collar" temperament. In an 1884 Dominion Day wrestling match at Macleod, John Herron was the longshot against a man considered to be superior to him in height and weight. A considerable amount of money was lost that day, as Herron won what has been called "the wrestling championship of the North West Territories." However, the champ was retired undefeated when Ida Herron objected to his sporting activity.

Soon after, the Herrons became unwitting witnesses to the sort of fear that the entire west would experience in the next year. On a hot day in July, Ida was home alone with their daughter when she looked up to see an armed, painted warrior, standing in the doorway, making signs that he wanted something to eat. Ida patiently fed the man and he left as quietly as he had arrived. Incidents like this would contribute to white settlers' paranoia, when Louis Riel began to contact the Blackfoot leaders. In response, John Herron organized the Number 3 Troop of Rangers.²⁰

Several men who had come west as Mounted Policemen joined the Rangers. Some had founded the NWMP remount farm where the Stewart Ranche was now based. A few had even worked for Stewart and undoubtedly, the new Major trusted these men to follow their duties implicitly.

Officers in the troop included Stewart's ranching partner, the horse trader **James Christie**, who was commissioned a Lieutenant and most likely, given his experience, looked after the arrangements for the horses, including feed and stabling (see chapter 2 for more on Jim Christie).

James T. Routledge was also a Stewart employee. Routledge was from Quebec and had some sort of business relationship with shipping magnate Sir Hugh Allan. A top rider, Routledge only had one leg.²¹

James Scott is a curious addition to this mix, for the Rocky Mountain Ranger medal rolls show a 'Lieutenant James R. Scott' in No. 1 Troop. Research holds up three different men by that name, any one of whom could possibly be held up as the Rangers' Lt. Scott. The first is James Scott of the Leeson & Scott Express Company, who held a mail contract in partnership with Stewart's stagecoach line. But evidence points to Leeson & Scott having held a special mail contract from Fort Qu'Appelle and Swift Current to General Middleton's mobile army headquarters during the Rebellion.²² It would be hard to think, considering the distances involved, that one person could have supervised such an important contract during those frantic times, and still have had opportunity to serve in the Rangers. A clue to a second James Scott comes from the rolls of Stewart's old regiment, the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, which shows a Trooper J. Scott.²³ But the process of elimination brings the likelihood of a Pincher Creek old-timer as being the Lt. Scott of the Rocky Mountain Rangers.

In the *Macleod Gazette* of August 31, 1886, an announcement appears proclaiming the wedding of James Scott to a Miss Morrow, and the story relates Scott as being "one of the oldest-timers in the country."²⁴ Indeed, the memoirs of another Ranger, Albert Morden, relates to the Morden family's purchase of a ranche from Jim Scott reputed to have acted as a scout and herder with the Mounted Police.²⁵ His 1886 wedding announcement also lists former whiskey traders D. W. Davis and Harry (Kamoose) Taylor as close friends, suggesting a possible link with Fort Benton and the pre-NWMP whiskey trade.²⁶ Scott may also be the Red Rock Jim who appears in many old-timer remembrances.

An Ottawa native, **William F. Powell** was named a Lieutenant. Powell was a militiaman (the payroll lists Powell as "attached" to the Rangers), and had served in Stewart's Princess Louise Dragoon Guards.²⁷ Powell may have some relation to Colonel Walker Powell, the Canadian Militia's senior Canadian born officer who had been the Militia Adjutant-General since 1862. Perhaps William Powell was Walker Powell's son. Sources state that Powell lived in Ottawa and was a good friend of Major Stewart's, so it is safe to assume that Stewart had brought Powell to the west on his return trip. This would have been done to add an air of military professionalism to the rough-hued Rangers, and also, provided that the two Powells were related, would have given Major Stewart easy access to the Adjutant-General's ear. Indeed, Stewart often contacted Colonel Powell during the Rangers' stay at Medicine Hat.²⁸

Charley Smith and his years as a buffalo hunter on the prairies were no doubt taken into account as he was one of two lieutenants named to assist John

Herron. The man was a seasoned plainsman, a Norwegian immigrant, a former buffalo hunter and owner of the Jughandle Ranche near Pincher Creek. Born on a ship somewhere in the Mediterranean in 1844, at the age of twelve he left his home in Norway and wound up in western Canada, and became a wandering fur trader. Charley soon became a relatively wealthy man as he travelled the prairies and accumulated furs, livestock and wagons.



Glenbow Archives NA-2539-1

Charley and Marie-Rose Smith. Born in Norway, Charley Smith came to the North West in the 1860s and became a successful buffalo hunter and hide dealer. In 1877 he took as a bride, a 16 year old Metis girl, Marie-Rose DeLorme, paying her step-father 50 dollars for her hand. In 1881, the Smiths started raising cattle on their Jughandle ranche at Pincher Creek. After the news of Duck Lake, Captain John Herron recognized Charley's many years of prairie and native experience, and made him a Lieutenant in No. 3 Company. Smith's efforts at drill instruction were often laughable, as he once marched his troop to the nearest saloon and ordered them to have a drink.

Smith adapted well to the plains and became a noted frontiersman, dealing with Metis and natives. Charley was often wounded in skirmishes, and proudly carried the scars of knife, gun and fist fights. In 1877, Smith and his fellow traders were camped somewhere along the Carlton Trail when a Metis caravan headed by a man named Cuthbert Gervais happened by. The caravan included two orphaned teenaged sisters, Eliza and Marie-Rose DeLorme. Sixteen year old Marie-Rose caught the eye of Charley, but she wanted nothing to do with this rough hewn man. Charley pursued her to Edmonton and asked her adoptive parents, the Gervais', for her hand. The two were married March 26, 1877 at St. Albert.

Despite the forced arrangement, Marie-Rose came to enjoy life with Smith. Charley Smith's family and other Metis traders moved into Montana, following the last vestiges of the buffalo trade. In 1879, Charley realized that the business of robe trading was dying, and with a growing family in mind, he began to acquire a herd of cattle. In 1880, Charlie grazed the cattle near Fort Edmonton, but found the winter too severe. In 1881, the Smiths arrived at Pincher Creek, and became prosperous from their cattle herd. The ranche had a quarter-circle S brand, but Charley also developed another way of identifying his cattle. A fleshy part of the skin under the neck was slit in such a fashion that upon healing, it would leave a hole that resembled a handle. Soon Smith's ranche, even Charley himself would become known as the Jughandle.

The Smiths were blessed with a very large family, and all 17 of them born between 1878 and 1904, were brought into the world without the benefit of a doctor. All were raised Catholic, as Marie-Rose had been raised in the St. Boniface convent and was very pronounced in her faith. Father Albert Lacombe was a friend of the family, and stopped in often. Marie even used Father Lacombe's lifetime railroad pass on occasion to take her sick children to the doctor.

During the early part of 1885, Charley Smith left the Jughandle to supplement the family's income by trapping timber wolves. The hunting party Smith joined ranged as far as Edmonton. While waiting out a blizzard near Big Valley, the boys engaged in a poker game. Charley caught a fellow wolfer holding a large number of aces, and demanded the return of the cheat's ill-gotten gains. The man took exception, and thrust a hunting knife into Charley's shoulder. The would-be gambler was kicked out of the camp,. Charley's shoulder never fully recovered, and was partially crippled and bothered him for the remainder of his life.

While on the wolfing trip, Charley's party lost their horses to two Sarcee Indians and fired on the thieves. Not wanting to initiate a massacre, Charley recommended a retreat to Fort Edmonton rather than go after the horses as his friend, Ad MacPherson, had wanted to do. When the snow thawed, MacPherson returned to the wolfer shack to retrieve the unskinned wolves that were cached beneath the snowbanks. Upon reaching the shacks, he was surprised by the hostile Sarcee party, who had skinned the wolves and kept them for themselves. Led by Chief Bull's Head, the Indians burst into the shack, guns in hand. MacPherson, at Charley Smith's suggestion, had had the foresight to bring several cans of plug tobacco. When given the tobacco as a peace offering, the wolf skins were surrendered back to the trappers without further incident.

Returning to the Jughandle, Smith learned of the Duck Lake battle. After the recent experience with the Sarcée, Smith had reason to believe some of the wild stories that were being told. Volunteering for the Pincher Creek Home Guard, Smith's years on the prairie and his knowledge of the Plains Indians, were recognized by Captain Herron as being equally as important as any knowledge of police or military regiment.²⁹

William H. Heath was the first settler on the creek that would later bear his name. Heath may have had some military experience, because he was given the rank of Sergeant-Major in the Rocky Mountain Rangers.

Another Sergeant was **Albert B. McCulloch**. Little can be found regarding his life, other than the fact that he settled on Pincher Creek sometime in the early 1880s. McCulloch seems to have heavily invested in the racehorse business, as he was said to have constructed an extensive series of corrals and stables. Besides raising Clydesdale draft horses, an indispensable breed in the early days of farming, he is also credited as being the owner of Scalper, a successful racehorse and offspring of another famous horse, War Dance. The McCulloch family was beset by tragedy, with the drowning of two children in the creek, and a house that burnt to the ground. Exact dates for these events have been lost to time.³⁰

The Rocky Mountain Rangers were graced by the presence of British nobility, in the form of **Lord Richard Henry Boyle** and his brother **Henry George Boyle**, adventure-seeking sons of a titled Irish nobleman. Lord Boyle's credentials were impeccable and he was named Captain in the Number One Troop, while Henry was made a Second Lieutenant. The two were the sons of Henry Bentinck Boyle, the 5th Earl of Shannon, a resident of County Cork in Ireland. Lord Boyle was born in 1860 in London and was educated at Eton. He also studied at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. After spending a couple of years as a lieutenant in the Royal Fusiliers, the young Viscount and his brother emigrated to Canada in 1882. Henry, born February 10, 1862, had also done military duty as a lieutenant in the Third Battalion of the Yorkshire Regiment. While Richard carried the title of Lord or Viscount; Henry, as the second heir to the title was allowed to affix the term Honorable to his name.

In 1881 the Governor General, the Marquis of Lorne, toured the west and romanticized the Pincher Creek area as a paradise. The Marquis' Aide-De-Camp Colonel Francis De Winton was determined to enter ranching and get in on the grazing lease boom in the west. His son, Frederick was enrolled in a special three month livestock course at the Royal Agricultural College in Guelph, Ontario. Also attending this course was a native of Prince Edward

Island named Fred Ings, and the newly landed Boyle brothers, all of whom eagerly lapped up Lord Lorne's flowery rhetoric. The four went west together and got off the Canadian Pacific at the end of track, somewhere in Saskatchewan. The group purchased horses and a Conestoga wagon, then they hired Metis Tony la Chapelle as their guide.



Glenbow Archives NA-4452-7

"Henry Boyle a British barrister and son of an Irish noble family. He poses here in Fort Macleod showing off his new buckskins for photographer George Anderson. Boyle and his brother, Lord Richard were investors in the Alberta Ranche.

At Medicine Hat, the party split, Ings going to the High River area to found the Midway Ranche. De Winton and the Boyles to Pincher Creek to set up the Alberta Ranche Company, taking out a lease of 15,000 acres in De Winton's name, 5,000 acres in the Boyles', and 27,750 acres in the Company's name. Other investors in the Alberta Ranche included H. J. Hanson and E. Wilmot. Richard Duthie, formerly employed as a canoeman for Lord Lorne, became the ranche manager. The syndicate bought land from a Metis named Mose LaGrandeur for a base and also operated a sheep farm near Calgary, the Brecon Ranche.

The adventure-seeking Boyle brothers relished the cowboy life, and in photographs are clad in western dress and seem to be enjoying the ranche lifestyle. One picture shows Henry Boyle in Macleod at the start of the Rebellion, at the time the Rocky Mountain Rangers first went into garrison at the NWMP post. Striking a fearsome pose with a cigar in his mouth, Henry Boyle could nearly have been a prototype for a Hollywood western, standing outside the I. G. Baker store wearing a buckskin shirt and fringed leggings or chaps, that seem to still have the store creases in them! Lord Boyle himself is pictured in a couple of photos in Medicine Hat on horseback, wearing a Stetson folded in a three-corner fashion similar to that worn by a colonial British soldier a hundred years before, and a roll-your-own cigarette in his mouth. At some point Henry Boyle had trained as a lawyer, and pursued a career as a London barrister. Lord Richard however stayed in the west, ranching, hunting, fishing, and for a couple of years even doing a little prospecting. It seems that with the Boyle brothers' noble blood, military training and unbridled enthusiasm for the western life, they would serve Major Stewart well.³¹

Other officers rounding out the troop included ex-British Army officer **Edward Gilpin Brown**, Captain of the Number Two Troop, and the Unit Paymaster. Brown was one of the few Ranger officers who seemed to have any real military combat experience. A distinguished British military officer, evidence from the Rocky Mountain Rangers paylists show that Brown came from Ottawa at the outbreak of the Riel Rebellion, likely at the request of John Stewart. No doubt, his military record was most welcomed by John Stewart's roughshod cowboy militia. What is known about Edward Gilpin Brown comes from an oddity of his career, his tenure as a member of the North West Mounted Police. His police record seems strange by comparison with other NWMP veterans who were in the Rocky Mountain Rangers. At least 13 of the Rangers had been in the police, and at least 5 others had served as scouts for the force before 1885. Gilpin Brown didn't join the Force until 1894, nine years after the North West Rebellion. Born in Yorkshire, England in 1854, young Brown must have attended a British military academy, for he turns up as a twenty year old Captain in the 92nd Gordon Highlanders. Brown served in that unit from February 28, 1874 to June 1884. During that time he was posted to Afghanistan during the Afghan War of 1878-1880. He was sent to South Africa in 1881, and fought during the first of the Boer uprisings there. In 1882, Brown joined the Nile Campaign during the Egyptian War, where he was aide de camp to General Sir G. Graham. In 1884, Brown came to Canada. Why he came is a mystery, but one can only speculate that while serving in Egypt, he may have met some of the Canadian soldiers who were sent there, and who may have told him of their country. In April 1885, the

British officer was attached to the Dominion Militia and travelled to Macleod to assist Major Stewart.³²

Stewart's friend and business partner, **Duncan John D'Urban Campbell** became the unit's adjutant. Clerical and legal skills, combined with his previous military experience, made Campbell the natural choice to become the Adjutant for the Rangers. Born at St. Hilaire, Quebec, on July 16, 1855, and educated at Bishop's College School in Lennoxville, Quebec, he entered the service of the Bank of Montreal, at Montreal, in 1873. In 1878, he was transferred to Ottawa, where he joined the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards.

In 1881, Campbell's captain, John Stewart, left to set up the Stewart Ranche, and the following year saw Duncan Campbell follow, at least part-way, to Fort Qu'Appelle. After a few months, Campbell was contacted by Stewart and urged to come to Macleod. In July 1882, he became the manager of the Captain's meat contracting firm, Ford & Stewart, becoming responsible for fulfilling beef contracts with the Mounted Police, and with the Peigan and Blood reserves. Campbell also managed a butcher shop in the town, but only stayed with the firm for fifteen months. In October, 1883 he was appointed the Postmaster for Macleod, and held the position until 1903. The same year, he was appointed to the position of Deputy Sheriff of the Supreme Court of the North West Territories, representing the Macleod sub-District of the Calgary Judicial District. Later, in 1887 when it was created, he would become Sheriff of the Macleod Judicial District.

Retaining his relationship with Stewart, Campbell assisted him in setting up mail routes between Macleod and Medicine Hat, and later Calgary, as the Canadian Pacific Railroad reached those towns respectively. Campbell also assisted Stewart in setting up a working relationship with another stage company, Leeson & Scott, to share the Macleod-Calgary mail contract. Using Concord, or Deadwood style stagecoaches, the service would eventually reach Pincher Creek.³³

Former NWMP Doctor **Leverett George De Veber** served as the Rangers' Surgeon. Dr. De Veber contributed greatly to the pioneer communities in which he lived. In Fort Macleod and Lethbridge, his name is held high as a physician and frontier caregiver. De Veber's family tree traces back to the days of the American Revolution. His great-grandfather was Colonel Gabriel De Veber, an officer in the British Army who served the Empire sent to suppress the colonial revolt. When the revolution was over, Colonel De Veber retired with a large land grant, settling in the Crown colony of New Brunswick.

Dr. De Veber's grandfather, L. H. De Veber, established a mercantile business in New Brunswick. The store was very successful, dealing in dry goods,

hardware, and groceries. The De Veber store became the largest business of its type in New Brunswick. De Veber's father, Richard S. De Veber, was born in 1820 and came up in the business of L. H. De Veber & Son, eventually taking over the firm. Richard De Veber married the daughter of a British naval officer, and five children were born to the family, the oldest being Leverett George De Veber, born February 10, 1849, at Saint John, New Brunswick.



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19694786000

Dr. Leverett George De Veber, son of a New Brunswick Loyalist family, studied medicine in Pennsylvania and England before heading west as a surgeon with the NWMP. He served as Surgeon with the Rocky Mountain Rangers, though his services were never required for combat wounds. He became a leading citizen in Lethbridge and enlisted the first Alberta provincial cabinet in 1905, later being named to the Senate.

Educated in public schools in the towns of Kingston and Saint John, New Brunswick, De Veber also attended the St. John's Collegiate Institute and King's College in Windsor, Nova Scotia. Determined to take up a medical career, he studied at Harvard before moving to England and enrolling at London's Bartholomew Hospital, where he, De Veber graduated in the Class of 1870. He spent one year in Philadelphia and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. Back in Saint John, the young doctor practised medicine for eleven years.

In 1882, Dr. De Veber considered an opportunity to practice frontier medicine in the west.

He engaged in service with the NWMP at Regina May 9, 1882 and was posted to Fort Qu'Appelle with the rank of Hospital Staff-Sergeant. During his term with the police, De Veber must have finally realized the extent of the duties that would be required of him. Indeed, a surgeon in the mounted police had a tremendous job. Besides taking care of sick and wounded policemen, a NWMP doctor was also obliged to care for the other citizens of the area, such as Treaty Indians and settlers. De Veber's service record bounces him around the prairies like a yo-yo. From Fort Qu'Appelle, he was transferred to Fort Walsh, then to Fort Macleod, and then to Fort Calgary, all in his first year with the force. In 1883, the force posted him back to Fort Macleod, and later that year again to Calgary. The frequency of the transfers gives some indication as to the extent of the shortage of trained medical personnel. It was not unheard of for a Police Surgeon to have to ride some two hundred miles on an emergency call, as De Veber did when he was called to Morley from Macleod to treat a sick, elderly lady.

By 1885, Dr. De Veber had had enough of the frenetic pace of mounted police service. His decision may have been influenced by his meeting of a young Australian girl at a police dance at Macleod. Rachel Ryan had travelled to the west with John and Ida Herron to keep house for her brother, rancher Charles Ryan at Pincher Creek. The two were married shortly before the Doctor's resignation from the force in 1885. The newlyweds settled down in Macleod, where Dr. De Veber established a private practice. De Veber purchased his discharge January 26, 1885, a full two months before the start of the Rebellion that would bring him back into active service as the Rocky Mountain Rangers' Surgeon.³⁴

Unofficially, a Home Guard had been set up in Pincher Creek. This Home Guard gained an official mandate when it formed the No. 3 troop of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Many Rangers performed double-duty as Fort Macleod or Pincher Creek Home Guardsmen, and several Pincher Creek pioneers show up on the medal roll of the Rangers. These pioneers include:

Albert Milton Morden was an Ontario pioneer whose name has been incorrectly transcribed as Alex Mildred Morden. Morden hailed from Barrie, where he managed a flour and lumber mill owned by his wife's father, Thomas Mulholland. In 1879, the business caught fire and was destroyed. Deciding against rebuilding, Morden, his wife Sarah, their three children (Thomas, Fred and Adelaide), a brother-in-law (Thomas Mulholland, Jr.) and a Dr. Brunskill and his family, made the choice to travel west to the North West Territories in 1880. The party had intended to settle at Morleyville, but were persuaded by American settlers to try their luck in the Judith Basin of Montana. They'd no more than

arrived at a suitable location and begun to cut timber for housing, when a Helena rancher arrived and claimed prior government grazing lease rights to the land. The Morden party packed up their wagons and re-crossed the Missouri River at Fort Benton. Following a bout with a measles epidemic, they got on the Whoop-Up Trail and headed for Fort Macleod.

The Mordens crossed the Belly River at Coalbanks on Nicholas Sheran's ferry, having to disassemble most of their wagons to get across the high water. After reaching Morleyville, Albert Morden decided he didn't like the soil conditions in the area, and purchased a ranche at Pincher Creek, from James Scott. In the spring of 1881, Morden and a Mr. Steed contracted John Rush to trail two hundred head of cattle from western Montana. Rush brought the herd in through the Crowsnest Pass, with the aid of Nez Perce Indians.

Morden's children related stories of painted Indians often peering into the cabin, but never had the family received any problems. Incidents such as this, especially at a time when massacres and battles were occurring in the north, often gave rise to wild rumors and crazy stories at the onset of the North West Rebellion. When the Rebellion began, Albert Morden joined the Pincher Creek Home Guard, and became, by default, a Trooper in the Rocky Mountain Rangers.³⁵

Lionel Brooke was one of that odd breed of Englishman known as the "remittance man". Born around 1850, he was a younger son of Sir Reginald and Lady Brooke of Cheshire, England and claimed to have travelled to Japan, South Africa, California, South Africa and the Caribbean. With no claim to title or estate, Lord Brooke, an artistic country squire, came to the Pincher Creek country in 1882, complete with cook, butler, and coach man. With the help of a quarterly stipend provided by the good folks in the mother country, he tried to set up the Chinook Ranche and enter the ranche country's social upper crust. Unfortunately, the good squire's heart was not in it. Brooke preferred to spend his days hunting, fishing, travelling, and socializing with anyone who would listen to him, from Stoney Indians, who called him "the Window Pane Chief", to cowboys, to whom he introduced the sport of polo.³⁶

The ladies among the ranching set's upper crust were usually quick to invite Lionel Brooke to their parties, looking to add an air of aristocracy to their soirees. In truth, Brooke was often broke, and occasionally had to depend on his friends to put him up until his quarterly payments would arrive. With his monocle, tweed clothes, and his carefree, artistic nature, the natty Englishman was a prime candidate for scorn and ridicule among the leathery cowhands with whom he lived. But there must have been a thirst for adventure in his soul, for he was among the

volunteers to enroll in the Number 2 Troop of the Rangers.

John Brown (no relation to John "Kootenai" Brown, although the two were very good friends) had originally come to Pincher Creek with his wife (her name is unknown) in 1883. They came originally to work for Lionel Brooke on his Chinook Ranche. Brooke's lackadaisical work ethic probably explains why they did not stay on the Chinook. They eventually went on their own, and were very successful at raising thoroughbred horses.³⁷

A couple of members of the original Pincher Creek Home Guard, were fortune seekers who eventually become brothers-in-law. They were soon given saddles and became Troopers in the Number 3 Troop of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. A.E. Cox and Les Willock were typical of western settlers, young men seeking a new life, building their communities, and with the advance of the Rebellion willing to guard it with their lives.

Arthur Edgar Cox, was born in the Camden area of London, England March 11, 1856. Leaving home in 1876, Cox crossed the Atlantic Ocean to take a job teaching school at Staten Island, New York. In 1879, he returned to England. But English life was not for Cox, and he became an apprentice on a windjammer sailing ship, the *Militades*, of the Aberdeen Clipper Line. The *Militades* was a wool ship carrying fleece back to Britain from Melbourne, Australia, by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Once in Australia, Cox went in to the back country, and worked on several of the isolated sheep stations for two years. In 1882, Cox rejoined the *Militades* to return to England, but had a slight delay. This time the ship sailed around Cape Horn, and was wrecked on one of the islands off the Horn. The crew was forced to survive on the provisions from on the ship. Sowbelly and hardtack was the order of the day, and great care had to be taken to keep weevils out of the supply.

While on the island, Cox's party nearly became a meal themselves for a few local cannibalistic tribesmen. But the natives were placated when Cox produced the homemade banjo he had on board the ship, and played a few tunes for them. For years after, the incident left Cox with the nickname of Banjo Man. Cox arrived in New York in 1882, and decided to see the west.

Going to Winnipeg, he took a job on a construction crew working on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the next year was hired by the Dominion Land Survey. Travelling to the ever-moving end of track when it reached Maple Creek, Cox purchased a pony cart and drove it to Fort Macleod, where he hoped to secure a position as schoolteacher. Finding no work in Macleod, he

travelled to Pincher Creek where he opened the first school and taught until 1891. He also performed ministerial duties until the arrival of an ordained pastor.³⁸

Leslie Grey Willock was the brother-in-law of Edgar Allan Cox. Born in Ontario in 1866 Leslie came to the west with his father, Francis Willock, at the age of fifteen. Previously the Willock family had homesteaded in Springfield, Manitoba, but were forced off the farm in 1881 by drought and a locust plague when "*even the fence posts and fork handles were nibbled*". Told of the mild winters and lush grass in the foothills, Francis Willock and young Leslie came and set up a squatters' claim. After establishing a homestead at Pincher Creek called The Poplars, Francis returned to Springfield, sold his holdings, and put his family on the CPR in 1883.

Riding as far as Swift Current, the settlers got off the train at end of track. They loaded a covered wagon, and a few Red River carts, and young Leslie helped to drive the herd of cattle and horses to Pincher Creek. The family lived on buffalo meat during the trip. The first winter was spent in a tent, but a log cabin with a sod roof was built the following spring. The Willocks were ardent farmers growing rhubarb, peas, seed wheat, and harvesting bushels of wild berries. The family also raised Clydesdale horses, as well as setting up a blacksmith shop complete with bellows and forge. The family did much metalwork for their neighbors. The Willocks operated one of the most productive farms in the region, and brought in one of the first steam powered threshing machines.

In 1878, a small group of American Indians set up camp on the Willocks' property, with the family's permission. The group were Nez Perce, led by the famed chief White Bird, one of Chief Joseph's most trusted followers. This band was part of the Nez Perce refugees, the last of the tribe that had fought a running battle with the U.S. Army in 1876-77, all the way from their traditional home in western Idaho, to their crushing defeat in the Bear Paw Mountains of eastern Montana. White Bird's group members were escapees from that battle, who had made it to Fort Walsh in Canadian Territory, and now peacefully made their home beside the Willock family. They farmed and built cabins on the Willock property, and the community was successful. In later years, White Bird was savagely attacked and killed by a member of his own band, a man called Nez Perce Sam. Soon after the murder, the group left the Willocks, and returned to the Wallowa Valley in Idaho.³⁹

Henry Ernest Hyde was born in Stratford, Ontario in 1860, the fourth son of Dr. John Galbraith Hyde, an Irish-born doctor and Jean Mickle Hyde, the grand-daughter of William Julius Mickle, the English poet. Educated in Stratford and

at the University of Toronto, young Hyde left that institution seeking adventure in the west. He arrived at Fort Macleod in 1880, and went to work as a 'bull-whacker' for the I.G. Baker Company, driving oxen teams from Fort Benton to Calgary supplying the Hudson's Bay Company store in that town. In 1883, Hyde moved to Pincher Creek, went into partnership with James Schofield in his small general store, and expanded the business into a larger store. In 1884, H. E. Hyde was named Pincher Creek's first postmaster.⁴⁰

Thomas Henry Hinton was born in the village of Chalford, in the English County of Gloucestershire, on November 13, 1859. In 1883, with intentions of making his fortune in Canada, and with his last 100 pounds, he travelled steerage on a steamship bound for Montreal. A carpenter and cabinet-maker by trade, Hinton found work at a lumber mill near Keewatin, in southern Manitoba. Here he met a lifelong friend, Timothy Lebel. The two decided to form a partnership, and head further west. They arrived in Pincher Creek in the spring of 1885, shortly before the formation of the Rangers.⁴¹

Albert Charles Connelly was the son of an Irish civil engineer, Robert Connelly. The family, seven sons and one daughter, came to Canada in 1870, settling in Quebec for a short time before moving to Fargo, North Dakota, sometime in the early 1870s. Albert and his brothers, Jim and Alfred, soon found themselves in Fort Benton, Montana where they began a bull-team freighting service from Benton to Fort Macleod, contracted to the I.G. Baker Company. On one occasion, shortly after the Battle at the Little Bighorn, their bull team was confiscated by a U.S. Army cavalry troop for use in ferrying supplies, despite the strong protests of Jim Connelly. The troopers finally had him tied up and placed in the back of the wagon, but were forced to put Jim Connelly back into the driver's seat when the oxen refused to respond to the new teamsters. In the early 1880s, the entire family moved to Pincher Creek. Albert and Alfred Connelly built the first hotel in Pincher Creek in 1885. Originally called the Connelly Hotel, it was later known as the Alberta Hotel.⁴²

William R. Lees had come west from Ontario in 1883 to manage the sawmill owned by Senator Peter MacLaren near Beaver Mines. In 1883, his sister Mary Ella Lees came west to live with him, but soon became infatuated with an English rancher named Fred Inderwick.⁴³

Frederick Charles Inderwick was an Englishman and the proprietor of the North Fork Ranche, together with two men named Jonas Jones and C. C. McCaul. Inderwick originally came to Canada as the aide-de-camp to the Governor-General, Lord Landsdowne.⁴⁵ It was the succeeding Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, who

inspired Inderwick to go west. In September of 1883, Mary Ella Lees left her comfortable Perth, Ontario home and complete with a maid, came to stay with her brother, William Lees at Mountain Mills ⁴⁶ Inside of a year, the high spirited maiden was married to Fred Inderwick (or 'Charlie' as she called him), and resigned herself to life at the North Fork, twenty-two miles north-west of Pincher Creek.



Glenbow Archives NA-1365-1

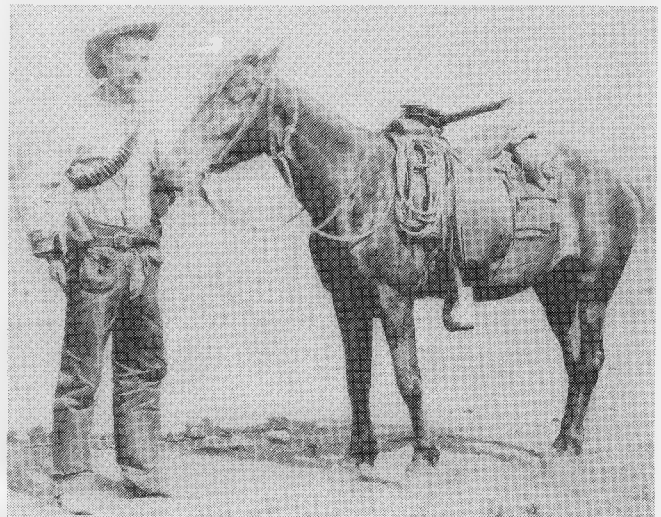
Fred Inderwick, former British militiaman and aide-de-camp to the Governor General, reveled in the life of a cowboy and became the founder of the North Fork Ranche.

Mary Inderwick kept a diary of her times on the ranche, but mysteriously kept all references to her friends and neighbors in code, probably intending the diaries for publication. Mrs. Inderwick assisted Charlie in his ranche duties often, and wrote lovingly of the isolated foothills, but she was not completely enamored of the ranche country. Mary Inderwick described Macleod as "*one of the last places to live in all of the world*", ⁴⁷ and she spared no words in her dislike of the never-ending wind storms that pervaded the country. She was also personally affronted at the British attitude toward Canadians. There was a class system that existed among the English-born, and Canadian-born women like Mary were of a lower caste, called 'colonists'. As she wrote, "*though I have married an Englishman, I have not lost my identity and I am purely Canadian and proud of it*" ⁴⁸

Eugene Chamberlain was born in 1860, and was a bricklayer by trade. He built the first brick house in Pincher Creek and built another for Albert Morden. He also helped build the Arlington Hotel. Later he resided in the Beauvais Lake district. ⁴⁹

Ernest Neale Barker was a transplanted Englishman, who worked on the Cochrane Ranche following short stays in Iowa and Montana. Born at Spelsbury, Oxfordshire, England on August 25, 1859, Barker was the son of an Anglican vicar. In 1882 he arrived at Sioux City, Iowa, where he worked on a large farm. Wanting to become a cowboy, Barker travelled to the rough and tumble cattle town of Billings, Montana. Eventually, he gained employment as a camp cook and line fencer on a ranche in the Bull Mountains close to the Musselshell River. Here, young Barker met hands who had delivered cattle herds into the newly opened up ranching country in Alberta. Purchasing a Conestoga wagon and team, Ed Barker and three others left for Canada in April of 1884. In a month, the party had reached Macleod where they announced that they intended to homestead, and were laughed out of town. Barker moved up to the Kootenai (Waterton) Lakes where he met Kootenai Brown. In August of 1884, he finally got a job on the southern range of the Cochrane Ranche, putting up the outfit's hay crop for the coming winter season. He spent the winter of 1884-85 working on the Muirhead Ranche for John Smith. When the call came out for the Rangers to be assembled, riding with a cavalry troop sounded like the thing to do. ⁵⁰

Arthur Morris is one of those Rangers for whom little information can be found. He is spoken of in schoolteacher Thomas Newton's diary, and is called 'Baldy' Morris. All that is known of him is that he homesteaded on the south half of Section 9, in Township 5, in the Fishburn School District, only a couple miles south of the Stewart Ranche. ⁵¹



Glenbow Archives NA-619-1

English drifter and Cochrane Ranche cowhand, Ernest Neale Barker as a Rocky Mountain Ranger shows off his mount and Mexican style horse appointments.

Besides Americans, Britishers and Anglo-Canadians, the Rangers also included a few French Canadian influences, stemming from the "French flats" settlements near Cowley. These included.

Maxie Broulette, a Metis who drove a Concord stagecoach and four horse team for Major Stewart's express line between Pincher and Macleod. His wife, known as 'Mother' Broulette, was said to be fully capable of taking the reins when Maxie was indisposed, and making the overnight run between Pincher and Macleod. Maxie was probably given charge of driving the transport wagons in the Rangers.⁵²

Frank LeVasseur was an Acadian from New Brunswick, born in either Basil or Madawaska, and came west to Pincher Creek in 1885, to join his older brother George LeVasseur, who by now was a seasoned westerner having mined in the Black Hills, worked on freight barges on the Missouri River and freighted for the I.G. Baker Company. Frank and George both served as Pincher Creek Home Guardsmen, and Frank became a Corporal in the Rocky Mountain Rangers.⁵³

The Cyr brothers, Adolph and Thomas, were ranchers who among other things, were noted to have had some sort of involvement in the illegal whiskey trade.⁵⁴

A few of the Rangers had also married Metis women. The ex-Mountie Chief Constable, John H. G. Bray had married Jeminma McKay, daughter of Cypress Hills pioneer, Edward McKay.⁵⁵ Charlie Smith took Marie Rose DeLorme for a bride. Marie wrote a great deal of her remembrances of Metis life, and her life with the colourful Smith.⁵⁶ William Allen Hamilton probably felt a little sympathy for the rebels, as he was married to Verny Marie Dumont, the adopted daughter of the rebel 'general' Gabriel Dumont.⁵⁷

Three men who had acted as guides and interpreters for the police over the years were hired to serve as Scouts. The job of the Scout was to not only guide a military unit through unknown country, but also to act as translators, in encounters with natives, and have a working knowledge of the cultural nuances of the various tribes. A failure to communicate, and/or to clearly state intentions can lead to tragedy. In this capacity, the Rocky Mountain Rangers were served well by their four Scouts.

Aaron A. Vice was no newcomer to the southern Plains. While it is not known exactly where he came from, he had scouted for the police at least as early as 1877, in the Fort Macleod area. The Commissioner's Report of 1878 shows him as having been charged with assaulting a man named William

Lawrence in Macleod in February of 1878, but charges were dropped. The only other details of this case may perhaps have something to do with the complainant, William Lawrence, himself charged with firing a pistol with intent to kill, only five days before the date of Vice's offence.⁵⁸

John M. (Rattlesnake Jack) Robson is a mystery. Two other Robsons are listed in the Rangers' rolls, **Henry B. and Albert W.** They may be brothers or even sons. Two photographs of Rattlesnake Jack exist in the Maple Creek Oldtimers' Museum. One dates to 1878, and pictures him in a Mounted Police uniform. The caption states "*John M. Robson, Q.M.S.*" indicating him as a Quarter Master Sergeant, however the uniform is that of a corporal, and there is no record of his service in the RCMP Archival Records. The photo may have been a practical joke. The second, dated 1886, shows him as a long haired, bearded plainsman, proudly showing off his North West Campaign Medal. This caption describes him as being a Scout with Major Walsh at Fort Walsh in 1876.⁵⁹



Maple Creek Old Timer's Museum PC.1.22

Rattlesnake Jack Robson sits for a portrait at Fort Walsh ca. 1878, in the uniform of a Mounted Police Corporal. Although the caption scrawled across the print gives him the rank of Quarter Master Sergeant, there seems to be no NWMP service record to substantiate Robson's enrollment in the Force.



Maple Creek Old Timer's Museum PC.1.21

An extremely rare photograph of John M. Robson, Scout with the Rocky Mountain Rangers. He was also known as "Rattlesnake Jack". Robson is wearing the North West Campaign Medal received for his service with the Rangers. The caption scribbled on the photo reveals that Robson may also have acted as a guide at Fort Walsh, ca. 1876.

On the rare occasions that historians even mention the Rangers, almost always it is in the same breath as **John George (Kootenai) Brown**. Brown was born in County Clare, Ireland, September 13, 1839. He was the son of an English military officer and his Irish bride. After a private education, he obtained a commission in the British Army and attended the Military College at Sandhurst, class of 1858. As a Captain, Brown was posted to India during the Indian Mutiny, but didn't see any action. After his discharge in 1860, Brown left the British Isles determined to strike it rich in British Columbia.

Brown worked the docks at San Francisco to raise steamship passage to Victoria and arrived at Williams Creek in 1863. After two years mining and trapping in the rough frontier gold country, Brown followed the gold rush to Wild Horse Creek, in 1865. There he worked for a time as a police constable, and took out an unsuccessful placer claim with four other prospectors.

Rumors of another gold strike near Fort Edmonton prompted the party to strike out over the

Continental Divide, with one horse. After dealings with the Kootenai Indians, the group left with four more horses, the incident becoming the basis for Brown's nickname, Kootenai. Once on the plains, the gold seekers followed the river, not knowing they were on the South Saskatchewan system, 500 miles off course. Camped in a bluff of cottonwoods by Seven Persons Creek, they were attacked by a band of hostile Blackfoot. The group managed to kill two of the raiders, but Kootenai took an arrow in the back, close to his kidneys. His companions removed the arrow and treated the wound with turpentine.

From there, the party split up as Kootenai followed the South Saskatchewan to the Metis settlement of Duck Lake and left for Fort Garry in the early spring. In 1866-67, Kootenai went to work for a whiskey trader named John Gibbons. He soon lost interest in the trade, when Brown, Gibbons and some American traders found themselves in the middle of a shootout in which one trader and an Indian were killed.

In April of 1868, Kootenai Brown hired himself out to a pony express company in the Dakota Territory, carrying the U.S. Mail from Fort Stevenson to Fort Benton, Montana. The firm eventually went bankrupt as most of the company's station keepers were killed by the Sioux. Taken on as a carrier for the U.S. Army mail route, Brown and a Sioux half-breed named Joe Martin also assumed duties as scouts between Fort Stevenson and Fort Totten. On their first trip, they were captured by a war party of Sitting Bull. Had Martin not been able to speak the language, both would have been killed instantly. As it was, they were stripped of their horses, guns, mail, even their clothing. After that experience, Kootenai stayed off the trail and worked in a store at Fort Stevenson for a few months. In November, 1868, he resumed carrying mail and about 1869, met and married a Metis girl named Olivia Lonnais, resigning from the army in 1874. Joining Olivia's people in the hunting camps for the next three years, Kootenai rode in what was likely some of the last of any native buffalo hunts.

Forced to make ends meet, Kootenai went into business with a group of wolfers. In the spring of 1877, at a camp near Fort Benton, an argument between Kootenai and a wolfer named Louis Ell turned deadly, as Brown savagely plunged a butcher knife into Ell's abdomen. Ell died in minutes. Kootenai galloped westward out of the camp but was soon arrested and taken to the Benton jailhouse. On July 27, Brown attempted suicide by thrusting a small dirk knife into his chest. Medical attention was administered, and by late autumn, he stood trial for murder in Helena, but was acquitted by the jury.

Kootenai moved Olivia and his two daughters to a cabin by Waterton Lake, and entered into a partnership with H. A. (Fred) Kanouse in a trading

post, selling dry goods and whiskey to tribes from the United States. Brown and Kanouse also liked to gamble with their customers, and were often forced to turn back their winnings in exchange for their lives. Soon American authorities discouraged their charges from crossing the border, and put Brown & Kanouse out of business.

By then, Kootenai was beginning to establish himself as a first-rate big game hunting, fishing and tour guide. He was kept busy visiting with ranchers and settlers in the Pincher Creek area, and in 1881, convinced Senator Matthew Cochrane that the Alberta district was the place for large scale ranching, later advising him to take up a second range near the Waterton River. Tragedy struck Kootenai's life in 1883, when Olivia died after giving birth. Unable to care for the children, he arranged to have Father Albert Lacombe take them in.⁶⁰



Glenbow Archives NA-678-1

John George (Kootenai) Brown brought over 20 years of plainsman experience to the Rocky Mountain Rangers. When hearing the news of the Rangers' activation, Brown galloped 40 miles across the prairie in a single day to volunteer his services as Chief Scout. His service in the Canadian Militia topped his military career as a British Lieutenant, a courier for the U.S. Army, Scout for the NWMP and a Magistrate's Constable in British Columbia.

Kootenai Brown was in Macleod on March 20, 1885, amidst rumors and rumblings of the actions of Louis Riel and the threat of a general Indian uprising. Leaving town, he went into the mountains and was not seen again for nearly a month. In his absence, the events at Duck Lake whipped the entire nation into a lather. As the events of the Rebellion

unfolded, Kootenai continued his hunting trip, and heard nothing about it. On April 20, he met up with the Senator's son, William F. Cochrane, at the ford of the Waterton River, and was told the news of the impending war. Kootenai's response was clear, immediately spurring his horse onward to Fort Macleod, to offer his services to the Rangers as a Scout. Possibly, the excitement was the tonic he needed to purge his grief at the loss of his family. By the end of the day, the most famous of the Rangers, Kootenai Brown, had galloped forty miles in one day to reach Fort Macleod,⁶¹ and was immediately named as the unit's Chief Scout.

A fourth scout, **William C. McCord** would be added when the troop reached the end of their march at Medicine Hat.⁶²

Undoubtedly, formation of the Rangers offered these men a chance at adventure. The winter of 1885 had been a tough one, and a chance to ride as a cavalryman in the warm spring sun was enticing to young cowhands who may have been unemployed through the winter layoff. Undoubtedly, racial tension could have been a motive. There was little love lost between an average cowboy and a tribal Indian. The clash of cultures was bound to produce friction, especially to range riders who may have already been involved in close calls with Native raids on cattle herds.

The day before Crowfoot's meeting with Dewdney, on April 15, 1885, the Rocky Mountain Rangers held their first roll call.

*The Rocky Mountain Rangers had their first muster on Wednesday morning and have been drilling since then. The men have got into very creditable shape, considering the short time they have been drilled. The military headquarters are at the old C and N Co.s [North West Coal & Navigation Company] office.*⁶³

The Rangers divided into three troops, and Lord Boyle, Gilpin Brown and John Herron were each placed in charge of a troop, commissioned as Captains. Boyle and Gilpin Brown's Troops would be known as the Active Service Corps. Most of Herron's Troop had previously existed as the Pincher Creek Home Guard, and was absorbed into the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Three days later, on April 18, as expected, twenty North West Mounted Policemen, under the command of Inspector A. Bowen Perry were ordered north to Calgary to join General Strange's column, bound for the scene of the Frog Lake massacre. Superintendent John Cotton requested reinforcements, and fifty Rocky Mountain Rangers were assigned to the Fort Macleod garrison, to augment the strength of the few Mounted Policemen left. Major Stewart forwarded a dispatch to Calgary, to be immediately telegraphed to Minister Caron in Ottawa.

To Hon. A.P. Caron.

From Calgary NWT 18th.

Organization complete, withdrawn Police from MacLeod, have put fifty men and mounts in Garrison at request Commandant. One hundred rangers additional on duty at important points.

(Signed) J O. Stewart⁶⁴

In organization, Major Stewart adhered to the Carrying Out Report that had been approved by Minister Caron. All were expected to provide their own horses, and he paid for its use, with an expense allowance for its feed. Each Ranger would receive an expense allowance for his own rations. It is very likely that several of the Rangers were provided horses by Stewart himself, since he'd purchased sixty saddles on his trip back from Ottawa, and had ample stock to draw from, and his telegram from Ottawa to Duncan Campbell had instructed John Herron to have the horses ready.⁶⁵ The pay scale for the Troopers, Scouts, non-Coms, and Officers was quite similar to that of the Mounted Policemen of the era. Arms were expected to be provided by the men, however, fifty Winchesters had been purchased by Stewart in Winnipeg and were distributed. Ammunition was provided by the Federal government.⁶⁶ The Ranger uniform was anything but uniform. John D. Higinbotham, a pharmacist at Fort Macleod, perhaps said it best in his memoirs, his description of the uniform.

Their remaining outfit, furnished by themselves, consists of a sombrero, or a broad-brimmed felt hat with wide leather band, coat of Montana broadcloth or brown duck (from which they have received the nickname of "Canvas-backs") lined with flannel, a shirt of buckskin, breeches of the same or Bedford cord, a cartridge belt attached to which is a large sheath knife, and the indispensable leather chaps. Top boots with huge Mexican spurs completed the equipment.⁶⁷

From all reports, it would appear that the Rangers' basic training was not taken seriously by the rank-and-file troops. It soon became apparent to officers that the farmers, stockmen, and cowboys were not willing to submit to rigid military discipline, and that any skills that the brigade were going to need, the members of the corps already possessed.

The *Macleod Gazette* covered the Rangers training, and took great delight in the humorous incidents occurring between the officers and the rough-riding undisciplined conglomeration of individuals that they were charged with whipping into fighting shape.

On His Own Hook

One of the boys left the ranks at the old town the other day to do a little business on his own account. Officer in Command.-Halt! Where are you going? Trooper Aw, you fellers go on, I'll catch up to you before you get far⁶⁸

An article in the December, 1941 issue of *Canadian Cattleman* contains a remembrance of the Rangers' training, written anonymously by a former No. 3 Troop Ranger who identifies himself only as Old Timer. In this account, Charley Smith, actually a Norwegian, is mistakenly referred to as a Dutchman.

In 1885 I joined the Rocky Mountain Rangers in Pincher Creek with Jack Herron our Officer Commanding. A Dutchman by the name of Charlie Smith was our Lieutenant. Charlie would give the order-"Mount, Walk, Trot," then when we got in front of the little log saloon-"Halt! Everyone dismount and have a drink" That was all the drill we got.⁶⁹

John Higinbotham liked to monitor the drilling as well. *"Discipline is quite unknown to them, a Mountie told me that he heard one of them, during drill to-day, call out to his commander."* When the Captain called his troop into formation, one errant trooper did not fall in. The Captain repeated the order, and heard an answer of *"Hold on, Cap, till I cinch my horse!"⁷⁰*

The officers had to realize that not only was hard drilling not going to work on these troops, there was no time and no need. The Rangers knew how to ride, fire a rifle, deal with Indians, and were knowledgeable of the vast open lands that they would be expected to patrol. The *Macleod Gazette* of April 29, 1885 pointed out:

Combined with the order which they had obtained by their brief periods of discipline and drill was that free and easy manner and action which is so characteristic of a border corps and which attaches to them a charm not felt in the rigid movements of the strictly drilled military of the east. Troops for service in the West only require enough drill to be able to act in unison and any efforts to make them mere drilling machines only trammels them and detracts from their efficiency.⁷¹

If the Rangers had seen any real combat, their lack of military discipline may have shown and could have been of some concern. But in the face of a looming all out threat, Stewart and his command would have to have confidence in their men's ability to deal with whatever they may face. The officers simply would have to submit to the

western way of doing things. making do with what you've got to work with.

By April 29, organization was complete. Fort Macleod was relieved by one company of the 92nd Winnipeg Light Infantry, that was in turn replaced by two companies of the 9th Quebec Battalion, better known as the Voltigeurs. On that day, the Rocky Mountain Rangers left from Macleod to march to Medicine Hat, via Coalbanks, with Troops No. 1 and 2, ten officers and sixty troopers, including all three scouts, Aaron Vice, Rattlesnake Jack Robson, and Kootenai Brown. Troop No. 3 was left behind with Captain John Herron in command, to patrol the area of Fort Macleod and Pincher Creek.

The march to Medicine Hat



Glenbow Archives NA-619-3

The Rocky Mountain Rangers, officers, scouts and troopers, line up for a march near the small railroad town of Medicine Hat. Chief Scout Kootenai Brown and Captain Lord Boyle lead off the column, which includes Captain Edward Gilpin Brown, in dark tunic directly behind Boyle. Next to Gilpin Brown, an unidentified trooper sports striped Mounted Police or Militia breeches. At the extreme left foreground, Major John Stewart and 1st Lieutenant Henry Boyle face the camera, while a badly-smudged transport wagon brings up the rear.

On Wednesday, April 29, Major John Stewart left the Fort Macleod garrison with six officers including himself, three scouts and sixty troopers. The unit was proud of itself, and despite the lack of pageantry and any kind of uniform, they looked every inch a formidable fighting unit. Charlie Wood of *The Macleod Gazette* described their departure as such in his May 2, 1885 edition.

*Departure of the Rangers
How The Boys Looked
And Where They Are Going*

The Active Service Corps of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, under Capt. Stewart, left for the Coalbanks at noon on Wednesday. Leaving the barracks, where they were vigorously cheered, they rode down past I G Baker & Co.'s store in half sections. Quite a large crowd had assembled, and as they passed the above point, they were given a rousing send off, with a long drawn tiger [yell] at the end of it. In front was Major Stewart, in command, and on either side of him, J G. Brown and A. A. Vice, the two scouts, both of them men who have seen plenty of Indian warfare, and who will take to scrimmage as a duck does to water. Both these scouts have the advantage of being able to talk the Blackfoot language quite fluently. Next came the men, flanked by Capt. Boyle and Lieut. Scott, then the transport wagon, and last, a rear guard.

The corps is composed of a particularly fine body of men, and as they marched past armed to the teeth with Winchesters, and waist and cross-belts jammed full of cartridges, there was but one opinion expressed regarding them, and that was that they would make it extremely unhealthy for several times their number of rebel half-breeds or Indians, should occasion require action.¹

While Troop Numbers 1 and 2 (referred to as the Active Service Corps) left Macleod for Coalbanks and Medicine Hat, Captain John Herron kept the Number 3 Company behind to keep watch on the Macleod-Pincher Creek region. This way the 32 Rangers and four officers of #3 Troop could provide double duty as the Pincher Creek Home Guard, and become eligible for full military benefits (as many of the Home Guard Units did not qualify for military service recognition). As well, they could take the place of the twenty Mounted Policemen that had left for Calgary to join General Strange's north bound brigade.

Even with the deployment of the 3rd Ranger Troop and the 9th Voltigeurs in the Fort, it was thought by the leading citizens of Macleod that a separate Home Guard should also be formed for the town of Macleod. An organizational meeting was held on Tuesday, May 5, and was attended by the Rangers' Adjutant Duncan Campbell. He had stayed behind in Macleod to explain the legal basis on

which the Home Guard was to serve, any prospective guardsmen would have to submit for duty on any occasion, and they were subject to the military authority of Major John Stewart.²

Despite his praise of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, *Gazette* editor Charles Wood was among one of those who thought that the movement of the Rangers Active Service Corps to Medicine Hat was a mistake.³ Police Supt. John Cotton was among those who believed that the Bloods still posed a threat, and agreed both to the need for a Macleod Home Guard, and that the guard must be subject to the Militia. Had there been any action, the Macleod Home Guard might have been absorbed as a Fourth Company of the Rangers, as the Pincher Creek Home Guard earlier had. After election of officers, former NWMP Superintendent William Winder assumed command as Captain, and the town's frontier lawyer Frederick Haultain, was named 1st Lieutenant. The Guard held weekly parades, conducted drills, and carried out night watches in the streets of the town.⁴

Though the No. 3 troop did stay behind, the mission of the Rocky Mountain Rangers changed somewhat at the time of their departure from Fort Macleod. The primary duty changed, from protecting foothill area ranches and settlements, to establishing protection for the building of the telegraph line from Medicine Hat to Fort Macleod, and guarding construction of the North West Coal & Navigation Company Railway, from Coalbanks to Dunmore.⁵

Coalbanks in 1885 bore little resemblance to modern Lethbridge. For instance, most of the settlement lay at the bottom of the Belly River coulee, surrounding the base of the highly successful North West Coal mine. In 1874, an American named Nicholas Sheran began mining coal at the present site of Lethbridge. In 1882, the Assistant Indian Commissioner, Elliott T. Galt, selected this site as the basis of a larger coal mining scheme of his own, financed by his father, Sir Alexander Galt, and a host of British backers. To be marketable, the coal had to be transported to the CPR rail head at Medicine Hat. A previous scheme employed a fleet of sternwheeler boats on the Belly (later Oldman) River. This method proved to be unreliable due to the fluctuating river level. But the three ships, the *Alberta*, the *Baroness*, and the *Minnow*, would soon see service downriver in the Rebellion, as supply ships.⁶ In January of 1885, the Company announced plans to build a narrow gauge railroad of its own, from the mines at Coalbanks to the CPR junction at Dunmore, a distance of 104 miles.⁷

Work was begun early in the spring, with Donald M. Grant, a CPR subcontractor, awarded the contract

to build the narrow gauge, soon to be known as The Turkey Track. The accompanying telegraph line was to be built by the Fort Benton firm of I. G. Baker & Co., and was to be extended beyond Coalbanks to Macleod. F. N. Gisborne, Superintendent of the Dominion Telegraph, came west to personally oversee the construction of the line. Both the railway workers and telegraph crews were concerned about their safety during construction, and threatened work stoppages if they were not protected from the threat of possible attack by marauding Indian bands. The NWC & N Co. management demanded that protection be provided by the government and the Rocky Mountain Rangers were assigned to the task.⁸

Upon arrival at Coalbanks, Major Stewart sent a small complement, six to ten Rangers, north to High River where they were to assist NWMP patrols in that area. The function of the High River bound troop was to provide a line of communications with the isolated ranches between Fort Macleod and High River.⁹ While Macleod was awaiting the arrival of the telegraph line that would finally bring a link between the isolated frontier town and its government, the Rangers would provide a dispatch service from Calgary. The purpose was to stem the tide of unsubstantiated rumors that were flooding the country and reassure the ranches that their concerns were not going unnoticed.

Besides the Indian threat, there was also some concern over the possibility of cattle and horse rustlers. The concern of the Rebellion did not go unnoticed by the criminal element, who were trying to use the re-assigning of police and the absence of ranchers and cowboys to their own shady advantage. To counter this, the NWMP set up a three man outpost in the Crowsnest Pass, to stop herds being driven off to British Columbia, and into the remote hidden mountain valleys. Outposts also existed on the Kootenai (Waterton) River, on the northwest corner of the Peigan reserve, in a rented room in the formerly notorious Fort Whoop-Up, at Fort Standoff on the Blood Reserve, and of course at Pincher Creek.¹⁰

Wasting no time, Major Stewart left a detachment of Rangers at Coalbanks and proceeded to march to Medicine Hat, where they were to set up Headquarters, close to the CPR, and its strategic bridge across the South Saskatchewan River. Stewart rode at the head of the brigade with fifty troops, including the two Boyles, Edward Gilpin Brown and William Powell as officers. Following the NWC & N Co.'s route, known as the Turkey Track because of its narrow gauge, Major Stewart's troops offered protection to the railway's construction crews. Rangers were left behind to accompany the progress of the track layers.



Glenbow Archives NA-619-2

On a Hill overlooking Medicine Hat and the South Saskatchewan River, the officers of the Rocky Mountain Rangers pose for a horseback line-up. From L-R, Lt. Henry Boyle; Captain Edward Gilpin Brown (wearing a hatband that may be from a Glengarry cap); an unidentified Ranger wearing a white stable jacket; Captain Lord Richard Boyle, wearing a tri-corner folded Stetson; Major John Stewart in a blue cavalry tunic left over from the days in the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards; and the eminent plainsman, John George (Kootenai) Brown, Chief of Scouts.



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 525.10

North West Mounted Policemen pose with members of the Medicine Hat Home Guard, Halifax Battalion and citizens of the town at the Police Point Barracks, situated across the South Saskatchewan River from the main town.



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 404.12

A Ranger scouting party in the Cypress Hills during the North West Rebellion give their horses a well deserved rest.

A detachment was also left at Woodpecker Island, a wooded flat on the Belly (Oldman) River north of the Railroad's water storage facility, Tank 77, at present-day Taber. On this island, the I. G. Baker Company's telegraph line crew was cutting cottonwood trees for poles. Along the march, at a point between the modern hamlets of Purple Springs and Grassy Lake, the Rangers left the Territorial District of Alberta and entered the District of Assiniboia. Another detachment of troops was stationed at the end of the telegraph line near Cherry Coulee, just east of modern Bow Island.¹¹

The remainder of the force, around forty-five to fifty troops, finished the march to Medicine Hat, where townsmen nicknamed Stewart's troop the Tough Men. The march, if one could call it that, was nothing to write home about. It was more like a long, boring trail ride. For these American, Canadian and British cowboys, raised on tales of the American Cavalry and their dashing exploits in the Indian Wars, they might have wondered what all the fuss was about. The Bloods and Peigans were quiet, and Crowfoot had already pledged to stay out of the fray. There were always loose stories of Indian sightings, but it seemed that the Indians were always heard about and never seen.

At a place called Seven Persons Creek, Scout Kootenai Brown had occasion to recall the incident that had left a deep impression on his life in that very location, twenty years earlier, where he had taken an arrow in the back from a band of attacking Blackfoot Indians (see Chapter 6 on Kootenai Brown). Now in May of 1885, Kootenai and his fellow Rangers revisited the scene of the battle and pulled five slugs out of the cottonwood trees, and discovered the skulls of two of his ambushers along the creek bank.¹² The incident was a stark reminder to the younger Rangers of an earlier time, and what the unit could be facing if they were to see action. It was also a reminder to Kootenai how much the country had changed in twenty years.

Following the construction route of the NWC & N Co., whose terminus was at the CPR railhead at Dunmore Junction, Stewart's Rangers (as the unit was also occasionally known) rode into the bustling railroad town of Medicine Hat.

The community of Medicine Hat came into existence along the South Saskatchewan River in 1883. It was the site of a strategic bridge that would carry the railroad across the river on its way to Calgary and the Rocky Mountains. The townsite had been chosen by the CPR's General Manager, William Cornelius Van Horne, for its abundant water supply and the proximity of coal deposits in the area. Crews building the bridge and laying the tracks had made Medicine Hat a rough and tumble boom town. Ranching had also become prominent, as Medicine Hat was in the heart of shortgrass range,

and within a day's ride of the lush grazing of the Cypress Hills.

Upon his arrival, Major Stewart established a headquarters camp along the South Saskatchewan River. A Home Guard had been established in the town with Thomas Tweed, an acquaintance of Stewart's, as Captain.¹³ Tweed was also from Ottawa and had opened the first store, Tweed & Ewart, in the new town. Tweed was one of the first merchants to challenge the powerful Fort Benton monopoly on the prairies. With quick and ready access to the new railroad, entrepreneurs like Tweed could successfully compete with the Baker-Conrad-Power circle of merchants.

The Medicine Hat Home Guard had been organized like most others, immediately after Duck Lake. The organization of the Guard echoed that of the Macleod Home Guard. A meeting was held to plan for the civil defense of the town. As had Calgary, Medicine Hat also received unsubstantiated rumors of a Blackfoot attack. One suggestion made at the meeting was to place the town's population of women and children into a structure called "the immigrant shed" and bar the doors. The meeting was attended by the town's ranking NWMP officer, Superintendent John (Paper Collar Johnny) MacDonnell, who scoffed at the notion and bravely boasted that his detachment could easily stand and defeat Crowfoot.¹⁴

Another motion was made to open the hinged portion of the CPR bridge (this drawbridge section was designed to swing out of the way to allow steam powered vessels to safely pass under the bridge without obstruction) to prevent the Indians from easily crossing the river into the city. Supt. MacDonnell strongly opposed the drawbridge plan, fearing that his policemen would be cut off from their line of retreat, while repelling such an invasion. A cocky young English cowboy in the crowd had had enough of Paper Collar Johnny, hearing him speak of taking on Crowfoot one minute, and discussing retreat the next. David Joseph Wylie arose to his feet and called MacDonnell, "*a disgrace to the Queen's uniform*"¹⁵ Whether the Superintendent deserved the insult or not, 'Joe' Wylie was more than a strutting peacock and when the Rocky Mountain Rangers reached Medicine Hat, he was among the first to become a new recruit.

A Medicine Hat merchant named William Cousins joined the Home Guard and in 1938, described the organization in some detail.

We had a meeting in Medicine Hat. At once a Home guard was formed. Thomas Tweed, who had military experience, was elected captain, Bob McCutcheon, drill sergeant. Every man in the community that could walk made up the balance of the Home Guards. We drilled every

*night and soon got into fighting shape. A night guard was picked out in turns for guard duty. The guard room was in Bill Anderton's photograph gallery. The women took turns in providing coffee and sandwiches for the guard. While we felt this would help, it was not enough. We wired the government for guns and ammunition, any kind. They sent us cases of Snyder rifles and soft nosed cartridges to fit.*¹⁶

Cousins' narrative describes the routine of most of the town Home Guards that were organized ranging from Pincher Creek in the west, all the way to Rat Portage (which is now Kenora in western Ontario). On May 4, Major Stewart wired Minister Caron of his brigade's arrival at Medicine Hat, and also communicated with the Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney

*To Hon. A.P. Caron.
From Medicine Hat NWT 4th.*

Arrived here with four officers and forty-five Rangers, established line of Couriers from terminus telegraph line to Fort Macleod with posts at Wood Picket Island and Coal Banks, will render all possible protection to railroad men and Medicine Hat. Indians quiet at MacLeod, left one hundred efficient rangers as Home guards.

*J O. Stewart. Major*¹⁷

*May 4, 1885
From Medicine Hat Hon. E. Dewdney*

Arrived here with fifty rangers well armed and mounted under orders. Confirm report as to Indians moving North and West of Cypress. Have reported to Gisborne and Grant and arranged for protecting their interest. One reliable report that half-breeds and Crees are at forks of Red Deer [River] Moving south. Am sending Scouts to ascertain truth. Request to be kept fully informed. Established line couriers to Ft MacLeod with outposts Coalbanks, Woodpecker, Cherrie Coulee north. Grant and Gisborne satisfied with protection afforded. Bloods unsettled when I left. Expect dispatch from Cotton tonight, will wire.

*J. Stewart. Major*¹⁸

Protection of Grant and Gisborne's interest referred to the Rangers guarding of the railroad and telegraph construction on the Turkey Track, and to the two men overseeing the projects. Bored by the long, uneventful march to the Hat, a number of the Rangers had drifted off back to their home ranches. Captain Edward Gilpin Brown's paylists indicate the names of three Rangers who left, William Chute, ex-Mountie William Carruthers, and Lord Lionel Brooke. Apparently, Major Stewart did not penalize these men and merely marked their pay lists as

'Left'¹⁹ It was even rumored that a few of these men had headed out for the action at Batoche, though no record exists that indicates that any ever actually made it. However new recruits from Medicine Hat area ranches soon brought the corps back up to strength. Rattlesnake Jack Robson acted as the recruiting officer, according to this account left behind by William Cox, a Mountie who was a member of Superintendent Cotton's Fort Macleod command.

*Construction had started on the Galt railroad from Dunmore to Lethbridge, otherwise known as The Turkey Trail. It was thought to be important that the work should be protected so the R.M.R. were sent down to Medicine Hat, and that did not suit most of the men. They wanted to fight Indians. They were hired by the month so at the end of the first month most wandered off to the ranches or went north on their own [evidently only 3 actually left] After the first month the strength was kept up by recruits picked up at Medicine Hat. There was one man in the outfit named Robinson [actually John Robson] who wore his hair long It hung down on his shoulders and was a faded red color; also he wore a buckskin shirt or coat with two revolvers in his belt and was known as Rattlesnake Jack, who acted as recruiting officer Used to meet the recruits who thought that was the uniform.*²⁰

By interpreting the regimental numbers on the pay lists, some of the Medicine Hat recruits can be identified. These included two brothers, **Joseph and James Simmons, William D. Armstrong, Henry Haymes, Henry Hall, George Holt, John W. Little, Albert Martin, Frederick Mountain, Alexander Gordon, Frederick Elliot, George Welch, Frederick T. Young, and Joseph P. Purviance.** Little or no information has survived regarding these individuals. One recruit shows up on the pay lists, a "Jos. Grant" Regt. #56, who does not show up on the nominal rolls. A little more is known of a few of the other "Hat Rangers"²¹

William C. McCord had first-hand experience at relations with Indians. Since 1882, he had been employed with the Indian Department as a farm instructor on the Blood Reserve. In this capacity, McCord had always realized the importance of co-operating with, and not antagonizing the leaders. McCord had some measure of success with the Bloods in trying to teach nomadic buffalo hunters to plough and plant. McCord had been in the thick of it, when Red Crow had refused to accept bacon rations in place of beef, in 1884, and had been able to settle the matter without incident. With his experience, McCord was made a Sergeant in the Rocky Mountain Rangers. On the paylists he is listed as a Scout. **Benjamin McCord** is also on the rolls as a Corporal and may be his brother.²²

David (Joe) Wylie, the man who had challenged the Police superintendent with charges of cowardice was born in Shrewsbury, Shropshire, England in 1859. He came to Canada to seek his fortune when he was 21 years old, and travelled to the Medicine Hat area from Winnipeg by oxcart, and beat the railroad to the new town. He had worked at various jobs around the 'Hat, and had even done some cattle herding. After the Rebellion Wylie would go on to much greater things.²³



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 525.10

In encampment, a pair of Rocky Mountain Rangers in front of a white military bell tent. Duncan Campbell, the Rangers' Adjutant, stands at left. The other man may be David Joe Wylie, the future Maple Creek rancher and politician.

William J. Patterson came from Montana and joined up with Charles Conrad's Circle Rancho Company.²⁴ The Circle was a branch project of the I. G. Baker Company of Fort Benton, of which Charles Conrad was the General Manager. The Circle Rancho operated its main camp in the same place where Conrad, in previous years, operated an illegal whiskey trading post at the confluence of the Little Bow and Oldman Rivers, just south of modern day Turin. At this rancho, former whiskey freighter Howell Harris was the foreman and Patterson one of its top cowhands.

After Major Stewart had established his headquarters, a patrol was sent further east into the

Cypress Hills, where a detachment was set up. The Hills were strategically crucial as the traditional home and hunting grounds of the Metis. The Hills also provided a natural shelter for fugitives and a virtual escape route through its trails into the United States. In 1883, the NWMP post Fort Walsh had been abandoned and had since been burned to the ground by prairie fires. The detachment had been moved to the new railroad town of Maple Creek, leaving the hills virtually unguarded except for Maple Creek's regular patrols.

Stewart's patrols into the Hills guarded the trails in concert with NWMP detachments in Medicine Hat, under Superintendent John MacDonnell, and in Maple Creek, under Superintendent John Henry McIllree. They also came down from the hills and interacted with the Maple Creek Home Guards commanded by Captain W. R. Abbott.

The Rangers, during their operations throughout the hills, met often with the Wood Mountain Scouts, a group of Metis volunteers organized and commanded by Jean Louis Legare. Legare ran the trading post at Wood Mountain, an area that had gained international attention as the refuge of Sitting Bull and the Sioux Nation. For five years, Legare and his post had become a focal point for the governments of two nations as the military and police authorities tried to force Sitting Bull and his band to return to the United States after the massacre of Custer's 7th Cavalry at the Little Bighorn.

LeGare's Scouts were all residents of the Cypress Hills. The Wood Mountain Scouts allied themselves with the government although they were not officially sanctioned by the Defense Department. The Scouts, 45 in all, were actually commissioned as NWMP Scouts and as such were paid from Police appropriations. LeGare's Scouts also operated around Moose Jaw and Willow Bunch, and were employed to watch the United States boundary for any attempts by the Montana half-breed community to send arms, ammunition, or men north to assist Riel's forces. They also functioned as the eyes and ears of the Maple Creek, Wood Mountain and Regina police posts, keeping the government informed as to what was going on in the Cypress Hills' Metis and Indian communities.²⁵

So the Rocky Mountain Rangers continued their lonely and often boring vigils, itching for action. Their patrol was an area ranging from the Crowsnest Pass to Wood Mountain. The Rangers roamed as far north as High River and watched trails along the Rocky Mountain foothills. They scouted the hot arid area north of between Medicine Hat and the junction of the South Saskatchewan and Red Deer Rivers, and rode as far south as the Montana border. For less than 114 men on horseback, it was a daunting task indeed. And another two months of grave uncertainty lay ahead.

News from the North.

Riding into Battle

Much has been made of the quick success of the Canadian government's forces in suppressing the North West Rebellion. The military maneuvers of Middleton, Dumont, Otter, Poundmaker, Big Bear and Strange are always seen as the factors. A more important factor in any battle is communications. In the case of western Canada, the building of the CPR became the key to winning the war as 5,000 troops were moved at breakneck speed from central Canada by W. C. Van Horne's chugging steam trains. The telegraph line was at least as important, keeping the settlements of the west, and military and government officials in constant contact. Dispatch riders throughout the prairies, the Rocky Mountain Rangers included, were kept busy delivering new information to the various telegraph points to be sent down the wires in Morse Code.



Provincial Archives of Alberta B-2026, Ernest Brown Collection

General Frederick Dobson Middleton, commander of the North West Field Force, was charged with putting down the North West Rebellion, and personally engaged the Metis at Fish Creek and Batoche. He was highly rewarded for his efforts, but later left Canada in disgrace, due to a scandal related to his troops looting of Metis possessions.

or at least hoping to

The telegraph was also important to Major John Stewart in dispelling the wild rumors that pervaded the countryside. The telegraph also insured that accurate information was received from those in the thick of the Rebellion. Major-General Frederick Dobson Middleton sat at his camp at Fort Qu'Appelle and planned his strategy for wresting control of the Territories from the panic which now gripped it. Besides organizing his own column to march against Riel, the British officer had to formulate a plan for keeping the country's Indians from forming an unbreakable alliance. Middleton kept constant contact by Dominion Telegraph with his superior, Minister Adolphe Caron, and made no bones about his disdain for Canadian troops, his officers, the NWMP, half-breeds, Indians or anything else that didn't please him. Fish Creek would teach him humility.¹

On April 6, Middleton moved his column - the A Battery, Regiment Of Canadian Artillery, Winnipeg Field Battery of Artillery, Boulton's Scouts, Dominion Land Surveyor's Intelligence Corps, half of C Company of the Infantry School Corps, 10th Battalion of Royal Grenadiers, 90th Battalion of Winnipeg Rifles, French's Scouts and one Gatling Gun supplied and manned by Lieutenant A. L. (Gat) Howard, an American Civil War veteran from a Connecticut militia - out of Fort Qu'Appelle, north past the Touchwood Hills and bound for Batoche.² Middleton's plan was to knock Riel out as soon as possible, cutting off the head of the revolt.

When Middleton's column arrived at Humboldt, he learned of the Frog Lake massacre, and of a change in plans. Colonel Otter's column would not be following him to Batoche, but was moving to Swift Current to march to Battleford. On April 22, Middleton arrived at Clark's Crossing, and divided his forces between the two banks of the South Saskatchewan River. As the column approached a settlement named Fish Creek, shots rang out and it became readily apparent that the column was under attack.³

Gabriel Dumont's concealed Metis and Indians fired from hidden positions, as Dumont and several others charged into a coulee attempting to draw the troops into a cross fire as they crossed the Creek. The Canadian soldiers were not trapped due to Middleton's effective division of his force. However, the troops found themselves in a shooting gallery. As howitzer guns were put into position, the Metis marksmen made easy sport of the exposed

artillerymen. Middleton himself was nearly shot when a Metis bullet whizzed through his fur hat. Stalemated, Middleton found himself unable to do very much. Dumont ordered his attackers to slip away a few at a time, and set a prairie fire that threatened the militia's position. The Metis slipped away in the smoke, while the other half of Middleton's column made a vain attempt to cross the river to assist.⁴

Though Dumont had been disappointed by the failure of his plan to trap the soldiers at the Creek, he was definitely the victor. Middleton had suffered a crushing fifty six casualties, with ten dead. Gabriel Dumont only lost four men, but most devastating was the loss of 59 horses. They were picked off by the Canadian troops who found little else at which to shoot.⁵

On April 15, the Hudson Bay post of Fort Pitt was surrendered after days of being surrounded by Big Bear's Crees, who had been sniping at anyone who dared venture outside the walls. The post was inhabited by Trader W J Maclean and his family. Also renting accommodations there were twenty-five mounted policemen, commanded by Inspector Francis Dickens. In order to save his family, Maclean defied Dickens and voluntarily gave the civilians up in exchange for fair treatment. The hapless Dickens soon found himself defending an empty fort, and ordered his men to build a makeshift raft and escape. Under cover of darkness, Dickens' command paddled the scow upriver to the relative safety of Battleford. It was a humiliation from which Dickens would never recover.⁶

In early April, as the Rocky Mountain Rangers had been organizing and drilling, Lieutenant-Colonel William D. Otter was moving his column from Swift Current to the relief of the recently besieged town of Battleford. Along with Superintendent William Herchmer's fifty mounted policemen from Swift Current, Otter moved his column, consisting of the Queen's Own Rifles, the Governor-General's Foot Guards, half of C Company of the Infantry School Corps, and A Battery Regiment of Canadian Artillery, across the South Saskatchewan, sending the Midland Battalion downriver aboard the *Northcote*.⁷

Assembling a train of two hundred wagons to carry troops and supplies, the column rolled on toward Battleford, and entered the town on April 26, 1885. On May 3, Otter picked up some fresh troops in the form of the Battleford Rifles, and moved to Poundmaker's reserve.⁸ On May 2, Otter's 325 troops attacked Poundmaker's camp of Crees and Stoneys at a place called Cut Knife Hill. The attack failed miserably, and Otter, suffering eight casualties, was forced to retreat to Battleford. The artillery was old and had not stood up to the wear and tear of the trail, and the Gatling gun was useless against an

enemy that had learned to merely duck underneath the spray of bullets. That Colonel Otter was able to withdraw without further loss of life was purely due to the charity of Poundmaker, who prevented his warriors from following the defeated troops.⁹

General Middleton, learning of Otter's defeat coming hot on the heels of his own whipping by Gabriel Dumont, ordered Otter to contain himself to defending Battleford. Middleton ordered his column to strike for the headquarters of Riel, at Batoche.

On April 20, the third column left Calgary. The unorthodox General Thomas Bland Strange now planned to take the offensive. Having secured the ranche country and Calgary, and hearing of Crowfoot and Red Crow's pledges of support, Strange entrusted the defense of the region to the NWMP, the Home Guards, and to Major John Stewart and his Rocky Mountain Rangers. Strange had been asked by the government to organize purely for action in southern Alberta, but General Middleton did not want to waste the efforts of the 500 or so soldiers Strange had organized.

General Strange's Alberta Field Force (as the body of his column was known) was a hastily put together organization consisting of several militia units. The Rocky Mountain Rangers were a part of it, as was Major George Hatton's Alberta Mounted Rifles, who were initially called by a Calgary correspondent, the Mountain Rangers.¹⁰ A unit of 20 mounted policemen from Fort Macleod, commanded by Inspector A. Bowen Perry, was ordered north to join Strange's column. Another group, Steele's Scouts, included some local cowboys, and an active band of mounted police that had just come down from the mountains after putting down a strike of radical railroad workers in British Columbia. Colonel W Osborne Smith brought the 92nd Winnipeg Light Infantry in from Manitoba, and one company was sent to Macleod to bolster the garrison there.¹¹

An odd addition to the mix were two militia units that General Middleton sent to Calgary, in what Middleton thought would be an insult to his old rival, General Strange. The 65th Mount Royal Rifles (Carabiniers) under Colonel J.A. Ouimet, and the 9th Battalion (Voltigeurs) were two French-speaking units from Quebec. Middleton was prejudiced toward the French infantrymen, and held an irrational fear against putting French Catholic troops up against the Metis. But Middleton's blindness was Strange's delight, as Strange had previously commanded the Royal Artillery in Quebec, spoke French himself and held the Quebec troops in high esteem.¹²

Strange's troops were marched north from Calgary in order to secure the country between there

and Fort Edmonton. Three forts were constructed enroute and manned by the 65th Mount Royal. Fort Normandeau, south of Red Deer Crossing, Fort Ostell at the Battle River Crossing (near Ponoka), and Fort Ethier at Pipestone Creek (by Wetaskiwin). The Alberta Mounted Rifles patrolled the Calgary-Edmonton trail, and the rest of the column marched on to relieve Fort Edmonton, arriving May 10. After securing Edmonton, St. Albert, and Fort Victoria, the Field Force left in several stages, on horseback and in several homemade barges down the North Saskatchewan in the general direction of the Frog Lake Massacre and Fort Pitt.¹³

As news reports began to filter down to Medicine Hat of the fighting in the north, Major Stewart learned of Middleton's reversal at Fish Creek, and of Poundmaker and Little Child's actions in the Battleford District against the defeated Otter. Despite these brave stands, the cause of the Metis and Cree only had a few weeks left. The danger would be if Dumont, Poundmaker and Big Bear could consolidate their forces in another area. The *Macleod Gazette* stated that Riel's people would "make for the Cypress Hills where once established, they can hold out against all the troops of Canada while their supplies last. They could also from that point swoop down on the settlements nearby and the cattle country, and put the whole country at defiance."¹⁴

Stewart realized that in the event of a Metis defeat, several of the rebels may try to escape into the American Metis settlements in Montana, and the route would be through the Cypress Hills. The Major even went so far as to offer a thousand dollar bounty for the capture of Louis Riel. Across the border, the U.S. Army put the post of Fort Assiniboine, (near Havre) on the Milk River, on alert.

To Hon. A.P. Caron.
From Toronto O.
[May] 7th.

Despatch from Battleford says all Indians west of there are in war paint-Little Childs and other bands have joined Poundmaker and half-breeds are directing them. Scores of homesteads been burned in the Eleanor districts and a panic prevails there. Stated Capt. Stewart in Cypress Hills district has offered one thousand dollars reward for the capture of Riel should he attempt to escape into the U.S. through that district.

H.P. Dwight.¹⁵

From the Rocky Mountain Ranger headquarters at Medicine Hat, long, monotonous patrols were sent out in all directions. north as far as the Red Deer River, south to the Milk River Ridge, and beyond to the 49th parallel, the international boundary

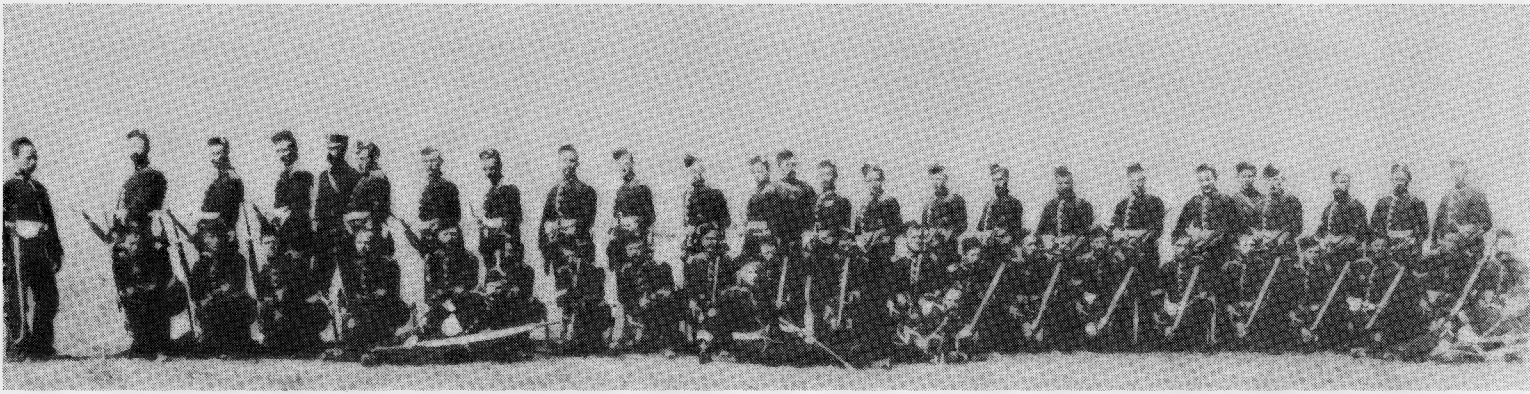
In the west Capt. Herron's troop patrolled the foothills, between Pincher Creek and Macleod. For the most part, the patrols were long, drawn out trail rides, and very uneventful. The Rangers' activities interconnected often with the police patrols of Superintendent John Cotton from Fort Macleod, along the Whoop-Up Trail between Macleod and the border. As well, Rangers continued to guard the NWC & N Co. construction and the Dominion telegraph line.

Supplies continued to pour across the border from the town of Fort Benton, Montana to Medicine Hat, Macleod and Calgary, as they had been for nearly twenty years. In fact, the I. G. Baker Co., during this time made its first and only wagon train run to Fort Edmonton, that town having had its supply and communication lines cut off by the Rebellion. Nine oxen teams pulling 63 tons of goods travelled to Calgary, and accompanied General Strange's Field Force on its march north. But the experiment was a failure, as the black soil north of the Bow River proved to be too soft for the wagons to make a regular route practical.¹⁶

When the Rangers first arrived at Medicine Hat, Major Stewart had his headquarters camp set up near the main town, but later moved it up river in order to maintain discipline among his troops, and likely, to keep them out of the saloons. Daily, the Rangers were ordered into formation, and put through mounted cavalry drills. They would patrol through the streets of the town, as other troop members were doing at Pincher Creek, Fort Macleod and Coalbanks.¹⁷

A few days after the Rangers arrived at Medicine Hat, the town welcomed the arrival by troop train of the Halifax Provisional Battalion, a unit consisting of two hundred infantrymen from Nova Scotia. They had been assigned to guard various points along the Canadian Pacific Railroad under the guidance of Colonel James Bremner. The Battalion had deployed at Winnipeg, Moose Jaw and Maple Creek, and the main body was ordered to the Hat. The unit Commander James Bremner was under the impression that upon arrival he would be in command of the southern Alberta District. However he was yet to butt heads with Major John Stewart.

The Halifax infantrymen set up camp above the town on the crest of the hill. Bremner ordered the men to dig rifle pits into the brow of the hill.¹⁸ Then, looking up the river, he noticed an odd sight. Several military tents not unlike his own were set up along the South Saskatchewan River. After setting up camp, Bremner went down to the post office, which happened to be located in the store of Tweed & Ewart operated by the Home Guard Captain, Thomas Tweed. The Colonel introduced himself, picked up his messages, and then asked which



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 148.1
(from a copy obtained from the Glenbow Archives NA-1323-6)

On the breakout of the Riel Rebellion, over 5,000 troops from militias originating in eastern Canada were sent by rail to Fort Qu'Appelle, Swift Current and Calgary, to march to the scenes of the conflict. The Halifax Provisional Battalion was delayed and arrived too late to join any of the columns, and so were relegated to guarding various points along the CPR rail line. One division arrived in Medicine Hat, and set up a camp on a hill overlooking the town, on modern day 6th Avenue. This photo shows the Number 3 Company, with Lieutenant Alfred Whitman, standing 5th from the left in beard and forage cap.

cavalry troop was camped upriver. Upon Tweed's explanation, Bremner demanded to know why this Major Stewart had not reported to him, as the Colonel considered himself the ranking officer. Tweed replied that *"Stewart is wondering why you have not reported to him. He was here before you were and is entitled to know your standing, whether you are an enemy or a recruit."* Stewart exercised his own territorial right to command, and was taken aback by this challenge to his authority.¹⁹ The Rangers and the Halifax Battalion soon became involved in a minor turf war, over who was responsible for the Medicine Hat area. Minister Caron's telegrams to him had made it implicit that he was in charge, and Stewart considered himself as second only to General Thomas Strange.

The failure of communications between the Rangers' and the Halifax troops' commanders came to a head, and an inter-regimental rivalry soon became apparent between the troops. After the Rangers would finish their daily patrol through town, they would ride up the hill to the Battalion's camp and see if they could cause a little trouble. The horses would be turned loose among the camp, and soon the mounts were entangled in the guy ropes of the tents. Eventually, the tents would be collapsed and the horses would trample the Halifax troops' tents. Then the Rangers would mount up and head to their own camp, all the while cat-calling and laughing at the "feet soldiers".²⁰

Though the town of Medicine Hat was relatively peaceful, the Halifax troops did see tragedy. As spring grew progressively warmer, the Nova Scotia boys would bathe in the river. Unfortunately, two of the Halifax men were caught in an undertow and drowned. A military service was held with Rangers and Battalion members attending, and the two boys were buried in Medicine Hat.²¹

We will never know whether the drowning had anything to do with it, but eventually Major Stewart

and Colonel Bremner came to an understanding, and co-operation became the new watchword. The rivalry turned from conflict to sporting events such as baseball, cricket, target-shooting at the rifle range that Bremner had set up, and even a tug-of-war. The Rangers won all of these competitions, with the exception of the tug-of-war.²²

With the addition of the extra troops, the Medicine Hat Home Guard soon fell apart, as nobody would attend the drills. Bob McCutcheon, the drill sergeant, complained that he had more officers than privates, and eventually he disbanded the Home Guards.²³

Back at Batoche, General Middleton licked his wounds from the hit and run attack of Dumont. He set up camp at Fish Creek and spent the next two weeks mapping strategy, gathering supplies, arranging for extra horses and feed for the same. Dumont had his Metis dig rifle pits and fortify the buildings, while Louis Riel appealed to Poundmaker, Big Bear and other natives to come to his aid. A few Indians did arrive, but not nearly enough to make a difference. Dumont and Riel argued bitterly as to how to fight the campaign. Dumont was an advocate of striking at night, and running off the army's horses. Riel disagreed, believing that civilized people should fight a civilized war. Dumont, raised in the strict rules of the buffalo hunt, was forced to obey the leader of this particular hunt.

Middleton spent two weeks waiting for supplies and troops to come up the river on the *Northcote*. Finally growing impatient, and still fearing an ambush, Middleton and Boulton's Scouts went out on a reconnaissance to the Batoche area. When he returned the steamer had arrived, and the General ordered the vessel to be armored with anything that could be found, and several armed troops to be put on board. On May 7 Middleton moved his regrouped column, now 850 strong towards the Metis settlement.

General Middleton's plan was to attack Batoche from the front with his main force. The *Northcote* would sail in behind the town on the South Saskatchewan River, and deploy the Midland Battalion on the shore. The night of May 8, Middleton camped six miles from the town, and was up and marching at 6 o'clock the next morning. The *Northcote* however, steamed up the river too early, and rounded the bend at 8 a.m., an hour before Middleton arrived. Knowing the steamer was coming, Dumont arranged for the Batoche ferry cable to be pulled from the water, and stretched across the river to snag the ship. But the cable was set too high, and the only result was the ripping off of the smokestack, mast and loading spars. Gunfire ensued both at and from the steamer, as soldiers scrambled to put out a fire caused by the careening smokestack. Not one single shot found its mark and the steamer's commander, Captain Sheets, poured on the coals, refusing to stop or turn the ship around, despite Major Henry Smith's orders to do so. Saskatchewan's only naval battle was over ²⁴

Later in the morning, the Militia's advance guard moved into the village and the Artillery was moved into position. As the General ordered the infantry forward, the troops were once again bombarded by Metis gunfire, unseen in Dumont's system of trenches and rifle pits. Middleton tried to flank the Metis, but they were caught by prairie fires lit by Dumont's men. Lieutenant (Gat) Howard's Gatling gun was useless in the smoke. At nightfall, a disgusted Middleton ordered his men to retreat to an improvised stockade. Throughout the night, the Metis sent erratic, spontaneous shots into the government camp to discourage a charge, keep the troops rattled, and prevent them from getting any sleep.

For the next three days, each side held its ground and bided its time. By now, a gun-shy Middleton had 900 men at his disposal, while Gabriel Dumont held them off with a little over 200 men. Officers pleaded with the General to overwhelm the trenches with an all out bayonet charge, and overtake the rebels by superior numbers, but Middleton rebuffed them all. Riel wandered the trenches praying with his followers and steeling their courage. On the fourth day, May 12, Colonel Williams of the Midland Battalion mutinied and ordered a charge, and the Battalion was soon joined by the other units. Middleton had his bugler sound the retreat, but the soldiers were not listening.²⁵

By that evening it was all over, with eight dead and 46 wounded on the government side. Metis tolls were more severe, 16 dead and 30 wounded, casualties being a full 10 percent of the Metis population of Batoche.²⁶ While the government forces rounded up the rest of the Metis, houses in the village were looted and burned by some of the troops that were supposed to be restoring order

Gabriel Dumont made sure that his family was taken care of. He even found the time, while evading capture, to have blankets and food given to Louis Riel's family. Then he and Michael Dumas mounted two sturdy horses and lit out for the U.S. border.²⁷ For three days, Louis Riel wandered the brush, tired and on foot. On May 15, two of Boulton's Scouts and an Indian interpreter found Riel on the trail, and were forced to masquerade him as a Metis cook in order to get him safely to General Middleton.²⁸

Major Stewart received the news of Riel's surrender at Medicine Hat. The Rocky Mountain Rangers and Wood Mountain Scouts went on alert in the Cypress Hills, and doubled their patrols.

*To Hon. A.P. Caron.
From Toronto 15th.*

...Despatch from Medicine Hat states Capt. Stewart's Rangers are covering every trail to south through Cypress Hills country. They are apprehensive that Poundmaker is making for south through that region, and that speedy arrangement of troops with scouts & artillery immediately necessary to prevent lodgement in Cypress Hills."

H.P. Dwight.²⁹

But still they managed to miss the major escapee from Batoche: the Metis' Adjutant General, Gabriel Dumont. Accompanied by Michael Dumas, 'Uncle Gabriel' knew the hills a far sight better than the flatlander cowboy patrols looking for him. He and Dumas were hidden and fed by scattered Metis families all along the route. The settlers may not have thought much of Riel, but Gabriel Dumont was a man whose respect transcended all thought of risk. As Captain of the buffalo hunts, he had often brought fresh meat to starving families, and they were there for him when he needed their aid. Dumont evaded capture and followed the Milk River into Montana. He and Dumas later surrendered to the U.S. Army at Fort Assiniboine. He applied for asylum in the United States, and was soon released under an order from President Grover Cleveland.³⁰

On May 9, evidence of trouble brewing in the Medicine Hat area came when the freighters, Ezra Pearson and the Conley Brothers, left the town with full loads bound for Macleod. Overnight, Pearson lost his horses and believed them stolen by Indians. Nothing came about in relation to this development for 10 days.³¹

The Rangers finally had their first hint of action on May 19, when a Medicine Hat area cowpuncher herding cattle was attacked and fired on by a raiding party made up of Metis and Indians. But the incident remained only a hint of action, as the Rangers' scouting parties could not locate the raiders. The raiders were believed to be American

Assiniboine or Gros Ventre, thought to have been in the area on a horse-gathering expedition.³³

In the middle of the month about 150 Blood Indians left the reserve on the Belly River and went north. The people of Macleod had no idea what they had planned. The Bloods always maintained that they did not believe what the Crees were telling them, and they regarded stories of the Gatling gun as a myth. Just the same, the *Macleod Gazette* wrote that the Active Service Corps of the Rocky Mountain Rangers should be recalled to deal with the Bloods. The editor even went so far as to suggest that Medicine Hat raise its own corps, and let the Rocky Mountain Rangers come home. It was apparent that even though the Rebellion was winding down, alarm and paranoia was still felt in the ranche country.³³

By the end of May, the Dominion Telegraph line had been completed from Medicine Hat to Fort Macleod, greatly assisting Supt. John Cotton and Major Stewart in their movements and communications. Fort Macleod, after eleven years of existence finally had direct contact with the government. Two telegraph offices were installed, one at the police barracks and one at the town post office. Stewart petitioned the government to have the telegraph line extended to Pincher Creek, but this was declined.³⁴

Near the end of May, Ranger Sergeant, William Jackson, was on a solitary patrol somewhere in the Medicine Hat area (some accounts indicate south of the Cypress Hills near the border while other stories place Jackson 30 miles west of Medicine Hat near Bow Island) when he was shot at by a group of American Indians, either Gros Ventres or Assiniboine. Outnumbered, and possibly showing more pluck than good judgement, Jackson levelled his Winchester carbine and fired back. His actions were answered by more return fire. Then oddly enough, both parties departed, galloping off in opposite directions. Jackson returned to Medicine Hat and reported the incident to his commanding officer. Again the Rangers rode off in pursuit.³⁵

At Macleod, John Cotton received a telegram from Stewart reporting the Jackson incident, and simultaneously heard from his own NWMP scouts of the presence of this same party. Immediately, Cotton set out with his own patrol to assist Stewart in seeking out the perpetrators.³⁶

Major Stewart sent out Ranger patrols west and south from Medicine Hat. Nothing was found, and officers began to doubt Jackson's word. Slightly perturbed, Sgt. Jackson insisted that the group was still in the district. He picked up some brush and started a signal fire that was soon answered by a corresponding fire. The Rangers gave chase in the fire's general direction. Still, no sign could be found anywhere of the invading party.³⁷

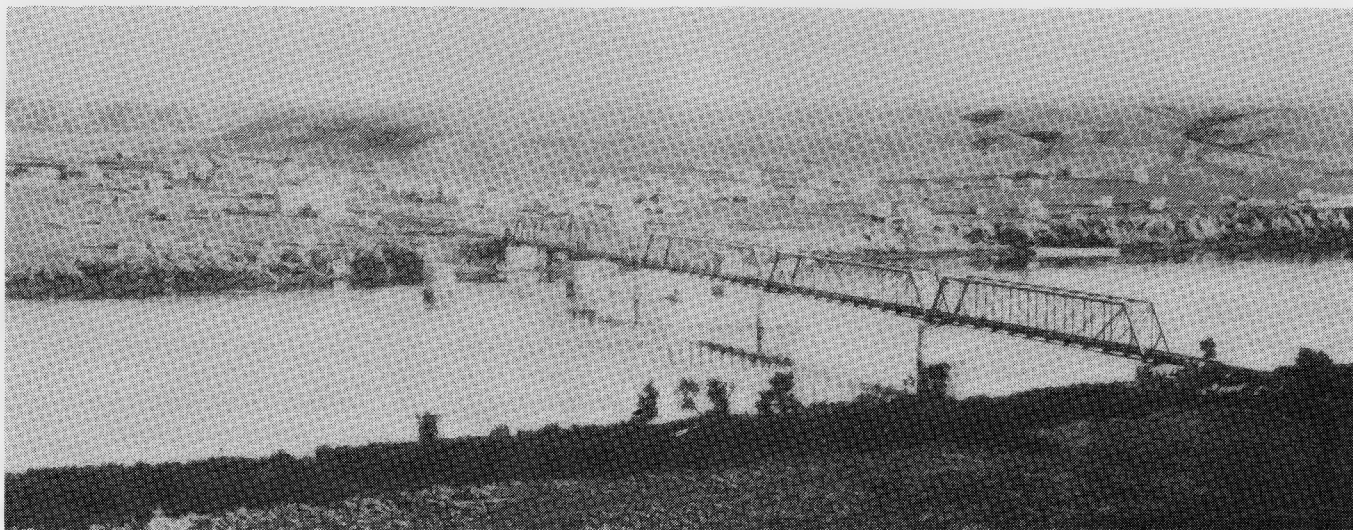
The moving about of the forces has had the desired effect of giving confidence to the railway men, and may make the Indians go south to the United States, as it is presumed they saw the movements of the troops. Jackson says the Indians he met and fired on were either Assiniboines or Gros Ventres from the States. There is no doubt that Major Stewart and his men have done good work. Yesterday he and several parties were out eastward, and Major Cotton had sent some of his men to meet Stewart's couriers.³⁸

Rumors Of War

A message was received by Major Cotton from Major Stewart to the effect that some of his men had run across thirty or forty Indians and that shots had been exchanged. This happened somewhere near Medicine Hat. It was not known who or what the Indians were. Owing to the above Major Cotton and Dr Kennedy started on Monday morning with twenty men for Lethbridge and points further east. Major Cotton was anxious as to what Indians they were. A great many Bloods were away from their reserve, and supposed by some to be in that direction. If they turn out to be such Major Cotton will endeavour to get them back to their reserve. It is to be sincerely hoped that no mistaken identity or other cause has resulted in the Bloods being fired on, unless they were committing depredations.³⁹

Cotton left Macleod and arrived at Lethbridge the same day, via Fort Kipp. The next day they went east following an old trail through Chin Coulee. Cotton's scouts had heard reports of raiding parties around the head of Chin Coulee, but NWMP patrols always seemed to be a day behind the rumors. They then moved from the railroad at Woodpecker (Barnwell), to a cow camp called Foley's Camp, awaiting further communications from Major Stewart. They remained at Foley's for a couple of days, hearing nothing, and then returned to Lethbridge, where the dispatch letters from Stewart were found waiting.⁴⁰

Much of the routine work usually done by the absent mounted policemen was accomplished by the Rocky Mountain Rangers, and the troop often became involved in combined Ranger and Police patrols. It is important to remember that many Rangers were ex-Mounties, and that the routine was nothing new to them. Between Macleod and High River, Ranger/Mountie patrols also doubled as couriers, carrying news and acting as communication links between ranches, Police outposts, and remote settlements. These dispatches were credited with maintaining peace and dispelling the wild rumors.



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 152.3

Early Medicine Hat in 1885. The large gathering of white bell tents at top centre, identifies the camp of the Halifax Provisional Battalion. Not visible is the camp of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, segregated from the townspeople and the Halifax unit, by order of Major Stewart. The two units did not get along, and the Rangers often tore down the tents of their rivals. Sir Charles Tupper's son William was in the Halifax Battalion and wrote that: (the Rangers) "go through the town firing revolvers and swearing like fiends"

Near High River, the scene was rather peaceful. The range was being watched over by an organization similar to the Rangers. A non-military unit was formed by Bar-U Rancho manager Fred Stimson. Stimson's Scouts, whose informal ranks included future Senator Dan Riley and famed black cowboy John Ware, combined patrols with their own range-riding duties, and discouraged any possible depredations by the Sarcee tribe. One member of Stimson's Scouts was the Midway Rancho owner Frederick Ings. Ings often rode in tandem with John Ware. On one occasion, Ings and Ware came upon a freshly killed beef carcass, and shortly after found a young Stoney brave travelling on foot, and charged the Indian with the crime. The Stoney protested his innocence, and the rest of the story was related like this.

...John began to uncoil his rope, saying, "We'll hang him anyway. If he's not guilty today, he will be tomorrow." The Indian drew himself up to his full height, presenting an appearance of great dignity. He raised his hand, looking straight at us. There was no fear, no cringing, as he spoke in a clear firm voice. "N'appeequin Kistra machestee si apitz." (White man, I do not lie.) Convinced of his innocence, we left him.⁴¹

Fred Ings related another experience that happened to him in his cabin, one that could have threatened the peace on the rangeland, had anything come of it:

One day I was alone in my shack, crippled having cut my foot with an axe. I heard a noise of horses running. Four Sarcees ran, Indian fashion, right to the house, throwing their horses on their haunches at the door which they pushed

open and entered. They were decked in war paint and carried carbines. Speaking in Indian [Blackfoot], they told me to get some grub in a hurry. I pretended not to understand. They kept at me when they saw that I was on crutches. At least, one of them poked me in the ribs with his rifle. With the aid of a crutch, I picked up a stick of firewood and started in on them. What the outcome would have been, I don't know, had they not heard the rumble of an approaching wagon. they ran for their horses with cries of, "White man coming" I managed to reach my bunk and grab my Colt revolver from under my pillow, and shot at them as they ran, but luckily they were out of range, for had I killed one, serious trouble might have started.⁴²

Near the end of May, a combined Ranger-Mountie team near High River came upon the trail of an outlaw horse theft ring that was using the distraction of the Rebellion to cover their drives of stolen horses out of Montana and into the Highwood River area. When a sighting of one of these horse drives was reported near Fort Macleod, the team went off in pursuit. Using a seldom used trail, the Ranger-Mountie team found sixteen stolen horses and overtook two thieves along the banks of the Highwood River

Evading The Customs The Old, Old Trick And The Usual Result Seizure Of A Band Of Horses

On Tuesday, the 29th [of] May, information was received at the barracks that a band of horses had been brought in from Montana, and had been taken north, the parties keeping well east of the regular trail. It was subsequently

found that they were seen about ten miles east of Kipp, and had not stopped at New Oxley or Mosquito Creek.

On Saturday Serg. Spicer, Corpl. Jarvis and a Mountain Ranger [unnamed] started from Macleod in pursuit, and overtook the outfit at High River. No trace of the horses was at first found, but it was finally discovered that they were further down the river. Serg. Spicer waited for the arrival of Serg. Turner from Calgary, when the arrest was made, and the men, two in number, together with the horses, were brought back to Macleod. There were sixteen horses.⁴³

Two rustlers were arrested and imprisoned in the Fort Macleod jail. On June 8, a man named J. Colville was tried and convicted of horse stealing. He was sentenced by Colonel Macleod, the Stipendiary Magistrate, to three months hard labor. What happened to Colville's accomplice is not known. The outlaws probably should have considered themselves lucky that they were apprehended on Canadian soil. If caught in Montana, they surely would have been hanged. Only a month earlier, two Canadians had stolen a herd of mules from the North West Coal & Navigation Company and taken them to Montana. The Canadian thieves, one an ex-mountie, were arrested by Deputy Sheriff Joe Kipp, but were soon taken captive by Montana vigilantes and hanged from the nearest tree.⁴⁴

In the north, General Frederick Middleton, triumphant from his victory at Batoche, marched the troops to Prince Albert to relieve the inhabitants of the stockade. From there he rode the *Northcote* up the North Saskatchewan to Battleford. On May 25, the General received the surrender of Poundmaker, the only Rebellion leader to give up without losing a battle. From Battleford, Middleton's group began to move upriver in an attempt to catch Big Bear's band in a two-pronged attack, with General Strange's Alberta Field Force coming up from the west.

Though Riel had surrendered, and Poundmaker's Crees had laid down their arms, Big Bear and his band were still at large. Some of the most intense battles of Canada's civil war would soon be fought by John Stewart's commanding officer, General Strange, and his Alberta Field Force. Arriving at the ruins of Fort Pitt on May 24, a detachment was sent to Frog Lake. What they found were the ghastly remains of the nine men killed in the massacre some weeks earlier, as well as the body of a lone mounted policeman, near Fort Pitt.⁴⁵

On May 26, Sam Steele's Scouts were ambushed east of Frog Lake. A short gun battle ensued and one Cree was killed. The remaining attackers told Big Bear about the arrival of Strange and Steele, and

Big Bear chose to make a stand at a high cone-shaped, heavily-treed ridge called Frenchman's Butte, near the Little Red Deer River. On the morning of May 28, the Field Force moved to the base of the hill. A nine pound field gun opened fire on the Cree rifle pits, with little effect. Steele's Scouts moved up the hill and then descended to a brush patch near a creek. The other units flanked to either side along the creek. Infantry could not cross the swamps without being exposed, and Steele could not flank the encampments for the same reasons.⁴⁶

Any other officer might have attempted a charge at this time, as Middleton's officers had at Batoche. But the situation was different here, and Strange realized that dividing his forces to the sides, would result in a massacre. He withdrew at the full risk of heavy gunfire as his force slowly came out from their cover. Three men were wounded, and one was pulled off an exposed area of the hill by the General himself. The Frenchman's Butte battle became another indecisive stalemate for the government, as the Alberta Field Force regrouped at its camp at Fort Pitt.⁴⁷

A week later Big Bear ordered the release of a few of the white prisoners taken from Frog Lake, and they made their way to Fort Pitt about the same time General Middleton arrived on the *Northcote*. The next day, Sam Steele's Scouts gave pursuit in the direction from which the prisoners had come. A sniper ambushed and wounded a Scout on their first day out. Steele's brigade trapped what was left of the Crees a day later, when they tried to cross an isthmus on Loon Lake. A battle ensued, and six Crees were killed, while two of Steele's Scouts were wounded. The land bridge where the battle took place has since been known as Steele's Narrows. Following the fight, the combined war party scattered, the Chipewyan band going back to their Cold Lake reserve; the Woods Crees headed out past Beaver River; and the main group, led by Big Bear himself, off to the northeast.⁴⁸

Middleton took command of the combined Field Forces, and ordered General Strange to the Beaver River in a vain attempt to cut off Big Bear's retreat. Strange ended up at Cold Lake, and on June 9, arrested several Chipewyan leaders for their part in the Frog Lake massacre. The Woods Cree surrendered on their own at Fort Pitt, and the instigator of Frog Lake, Wandering Spirit, along with the other ringleaders, was brought to trial in Regina.⁴⁹

In southern Alberta, the dramatic events of the north did not repeat themselves. Blackfoot, Blood, and Peigan bands were swiftly and accurately told of the defeat of the rebels. Throughout the rest of June, 1885, the Rocky Mountain Ranger patrols were completely uneventful. They performed

NWMP duties; delivering dispatches, visiting ranches, escorting the freight wagons and general patrol work. The Whoop-Up Trail was watched closely, being the main route from the Missouri River port of Fort Benton, as were the trails to Maple Creek and Medicine Hat.

In the south, Major Stewart and Supt. Cotton kept their men on alert, both for escapees from the northern battles and for American Indians seeking to take advantage of Rebellion hysteria for their own ends. Only the news from Frenchman's Butte and Loon Lake regarding the defeat of Big Bear's Crees by General Strange's column, brought any excitement. When Big Bear escaped the scene of the fighting, Stewart increased his vigilance on the trails leading through the Cypress Hills. Many of the remaining rebel Crees were expected to make a break south to the Montana hunting grounds that many of them had previously hunted in. Gradually over the next month, the scattered warriors realized the war was lost and wandered into army camps and laid down their arms.

Several Crees did get through however, many never to return to Canada. One escapee included Imasses, the son of Big Bear. In Montana, he became a chief, and was known as Little Bear

Despite many attempts by the U.S. Army to move the Crees back to Canada, several refused to return.⁵⁰

For a month, Big Bear and two others, his son Horse Child and a councillor named Two & Two, eluded all scouting parties looking for them, including one of Commissioner Irvine's NWMP patrols. He even came close to Colonel Otter's encampment but slipped away without being seen. Undoubtedly, he was trying to find a way to Montana, as had his son. Had he made it, the U.S. Army at Fort Assiniboine would have found itself with a reverse Sitting Bull situation. But the pressure was too great and he finally decided to give himself up to the Hudson's Bay Company that had always treated him fairly. Arriving at Fort Carlton, he approached a trader's tent across the river from the fort. The trader fetched two policemen from the detachment inside Carlton, and Big Bear was arrested by the NWMP.

Louis Riel was in prison, Poundmaker as well. Gabriel Dumont was in exile from Canadian law. The revolt had been broken. With Big Bear's surrender, the last of the prairie rebels was captured, and on July 2, 1885, the end of the North West Rebellion was proclaimed. Canada's civil war was over.



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 404.13

The bell tent in the background indicates that the Rangers are encamped while on a scouting patrol in the Cypress Hills. Recreation is in the forefront of their minds, as evidenced by the presence of open bottles. An impromptu poker game has broken out, a case of provisions serves as a table, while a cowboy in the rear practices with his pistol.

The march home. the Rangers disband



Medicine Hat Museum Archives PC 234.2

A multi-cultural group of individuals poses at the rear of Medicine Hat's recently opened Saskatchewan Brewery. Mounties, natives, Metis, citizens, and a couple of Rocky Mountain Rangers take a break from the Rebellion tension to enjoy a drink. Seated on the wooden chair at the centre of attention is Kootenai Brown, while to the right an unidentified Ranger holds a bottle and glass. This 1885 photo is often attributed to Fort Macleod.

After the news of General Strange's victories in the north, the days of the North West Rebellion were numbered and the Rangers bided their time until the capture of Big Bear. On June 10, Captain John Herron disbanded and paid off the Number 3 Troop.¹ Herron's troop had even less action than its Medicine Hat counterpart, and with the news of Big Bear's defeat, there just didn't seem to be any point to keep the men away from their ranches. Major Stewart became concerned that his Militia force and all their efforts would soon be all for naught. On June 17, he telegraphed Colonel Walker Powell and asked the Adjutant-General to recommend the Rocky Mountain Rangers for General Service.²

When news of Big Bear's capture hit Medicine Hat, the Rocky Mountain Rangers were ordered back to Fort Macleod. While Lord Boyle led the column of Troops 1 and 2 back to Macleod to reunite with John Herron's No. 3 Troop (the Medicine Hat recruits likely did not make the trip), Major Stewart boarded a train bound for Winnipeg.

Stewart expected to be granted a meeting with General Frederick Middleton, to press for his unit to be placed into General Service in the Canadian Militia. Stewart also wanted to persuade the Militia and Defense Minister to gazette the Rangers as a permanent militia unit for southern Alberta. The *Macleod Gazette* had no doubts whatsoever about his chances.

The Rangers have been ordered back to Macleod, where they are expected to arrive on Thursday next. They will be disbanded at once, but two troops, consisting of seventy men, will in all probability be re-enlisted for service until next spring. Major Stewart's offer to obtain this number of men for further service, met with a very gratifying answer from the Minister of Militia. The Major has gone to Winnipeg having been telegraphed for by General Middleton and the probable result of the interview will be the acceptance of his offer.³

As the Rangers were returning, citizens of Macleod were urged by Charlie Wood to turn out to:

HONOR THE BOYS

Mounted Policemen from Macleod have been at the front, and have faced the enemy. They have shown themselves worthy of the prediction we made concerning them. Another contingent in the field is also from Macleod, made up to a great extent of the citizens of this country. Though they have not had the good fortune to prove their metal in an encounter with the enemy, we can safely say that, had the chance which they were all anxious for presented itself, Macleod would have had just cause to be proud of the Mountain Rangers, and as it is, is proud of them. They have done their duty thoroughly and well, and their vigilance and activity have undoubtedly kept renegade fugitives from the northern battlefields from coming south and infesting the cattle country. We say that some sign of appreciation of the services of the absent police and rangers is due from the citizens of Macleod and district. While the people of the east are vying with one another to do honor to their citizen soldiers, surely we should bestir ourselves to do the same by Majors Perry and Stewart, and their gallant commands.⁴

The Rocky Mountain Rangers arrived in Macleod, on July 8 to a celebratory artillery salute. Personally, the Rangers were disappointed. They had been expecting war, and had prepared and equipped to perform in battle, but had to be satisfied with long patrol duties and dispatch courier service. But to Major John Stewart and the citizens of Fort Macleod, the Rangers' inactivity was in itself a cause for celebration. Their duty and their presence had spared the south the violent bloodshed in the north. The thankless job of peacekeeping was seen as a glory to be rewarded, as far as the citizens of southern Alberta and Assiniboia were concerned. As far as Fort Macleod was concerned, the Rangers were entitled to a party, and on July 9 the Rangers were treated to a parade down the main street of Macleod. In a ceremony in front of the post office, they were commended by William Black, president of the South Western Stock Association (many of the Rangers were members of the Association). The events and speeches were chronicled by the *Gazette*:

THE WELCOME HOME

The Rocky Mountain Rangers Return to Macleod after an Absence of some Three Months

Address of Welcome from the Citizens Lord Boyle's Reply.

On Tuesday afternoon the Mountain Rangers returned to Macleod, after three months of arduous duty on the frontier between here

and Medicine Hat. We have frequently referred to their services before as having been of the most valuable nature, services which entitled them to the gratitude of the citizens of this district.

We suggested last week that there should be some public recognition of their services and on Wednesday it was decided to present them with an address of welcome. The original intention was to visit their camp, some two miles below town, for this purpose, but as it was rather late in the evening it was decided to postpone the matter until the next day, when it was arranged to have the troop paraded in town.

In accordance with this arrangement the men were drawn up in line opposite the post office at twelve o'clock, and the address was read by Mr Wm. Black, as follows.

"To Captain Lord Boyle, Officers and men of the Rocky Mountain Rangers."

"By the request and on behalf of the citizens of Macleod and surrounding country, I desire to extend to you a cordial and hearty welcome home, after the months spent by you in guarding our lives and property from invasion."

"That your corps has no record of battles lost or won is a matter of sincere congratulation, and we assure you that the absence of such a record detracts in no wise from the sense of obligation we feel for the protection afforded us "

"We are well aware that the country so faithfully watched over by you, offered, by it's exposed condition and peculiar resources, great inducements to savage marauders who wrought such havoc to the north of us, and that our district was not the theatre of such scenes of pillage and murder as there prevailed, is due to the alacrity with which you responded to the call of duty at the first intimation of danger "

"We regret the absence of the organizer of the corps on this occasion as we would wish to congratulate him personally on the manner in which he discharged his duties, as we now congratulate the country on having such men to depend on in times of danger "

"You are western men you know the undemonstrative character of the western people, and you will understand that deep down in the hearts of those you have protected lies a feeling of gratitude to the citizen soldiery none the less genuine for being unobtrusive."

"We feel that the danger that menaced us has drawn closer the ties that bound all parts of the Dominion and cemented more strongly the feelings with which we locally regard each other "

"And now, as you return to civilian life, we trust that all good things may come to you, and we feel that as the duties of citizenship will be as faithfully discharged as your military ones were."

"Once more we bid you a cordial welcome home."

Capt. Lord Boyle, on behalf of the troop, replied as follows:

"To Mr Black, citizens of Macleod and the surrounding country."

"Gentlemen. On behalf of the troop I have the honor to command, I beg to tender you our sincere thanks for the kind manner in which you have welcomed our return. The address you have just presented, will long be remembered, I am sure, by us all as a mark of appreciation of our efforts to defend our country."

"You say truly when you say the country we had to guard offered great inducements to Indian marauders, but as can be told you by a number of our men, we did to a certain extent, drive back numerous parties of Indians from the other side."

"I also regret the absence of Major Stewart to-day, as he could assure you of the willing and faithful manner in which every man present with me performed the arduous duties which fell to his lot."

"I shall have such pleasure in presenting this address to Major Stewart on his return, and I only regret that he is not here now to personally return you his thanks."

"Allow me, once more on behalf of the officers and men of the Mounted Rangers, to thank you most heartily for this kind welcome."

Boyle, Capt. Com'g R.M.R.⁵

The Rangers continued to camp northeast of the new townsite, awaiting Major Stewart, who returned to Macleod a few days later. His mission to Winnipeg had been a failure. His request for a permanent force was turned down by Middleton and Minister Caron, since "no American Indians across the line frontier"⁶ had been seen. The government had racked up huge debts in fighting the Rebellion, and the contention was that a permanent militia unit could not be afforded for an area that had not seen any real trouble.

There was an evident bias due to the fact that the Rangers had not seen any true action. In fact, in Militia Minister Adolphe Caron's speech thanking the Rebellion volunteers, he hadn't even made any mention of the forces of Colonel William Otter or General Thomas Strange or their contributions. The two were being deliberately censured for attacking

against the orders of General Frederick Middleton. Any hope for special attention for Stewart and his "border guards", amidst the battle honors won by the Ontario volunteers was seen as asking too much.

On July 17, the Militia General Orders commanded the release from service of all Special Corps organized for the Rebellion. This included the various Home Guard Infantry Companies in Yorkton, Battleford, Regina, Birtle, Emerson, Calgary and Qu'Appelle, as well as the Moose Mountain Scouts, Boulton's Scouts, Dennis' Surveyors Intelligence Corps, and finally, the Rocky Mountain Rangers.⁷

On July 10, the Corps Paymaster, Captain Edward Gilpin Brown made out his paylists, as the Corps received its orders to disband. But the Rangers were not paid out and officially discharged until the 17th. They patiently sat in camp for the seven days while awaiting their pay. When they finally were remunerated, they realized that the government had only approved their pay until July 10. The officers agreed to take their case for the seven lost days to the government but no records indicate whether any success was achieved. When totalled, dispensations looked something like this.

Total Paid Out

*Preliminary Pay for
Stewart, Powell, Gilpin-Brown
From Ottawa, Mar 28th to Apr 12. \$ 251.20*

<i>Paid To #1 & #2 Troops</i>	
<i>April 13th to 30th.</i>	<i>\$ 2,825.30</i>
<i>May 1st to 31st:</i>	<i>\$ 6,384.00</i>
<i>June 1st to 30th.</i>	<i>\$ 3,384.00</i>
<i>July 1st to 10th.</i>	<i>\$ 429.50</i>

<i>Paid to No. 3 Troop</i>	
<i>April 14th to June 12th.</i>	<i>\$ 5,620.8</i>

<i>Officers' Field Allowance</i>	
<i>April 13th to June 12th.</i>	<i>\$ 231 71</i>

<i>Paid to Lt. James Christie</i>	
<i>For Pay, Rations & Forage</i>	<i>\$ 445.99</i>

TOTAL EXPENSES FOR R.M.R. \$ 19,572.50⁸

In the time spent by the Rangers awaiting their payout, and especially after, the whiskey flowed like water in Macleod. Celebrations big and small were held at local saloons like Bates & Genges dance hall, and at Harry (Kamoose) Taylor's Macleod Hotel. Harry offered up one of his usual gigantic feasts, this time in a patriotic victory flair complete with Canadian Red Ensigns, Union Jacks, and colourful bunting.⁹ Not bad for a former American whiskey trader

Trooper Charlie Thornton made an early exit from Macleod, and it was soon discovered why. Upon examining the pay lists, Paymaster Edward Gilpin Brown discovered that Thornton had falsified documents resulting in the doubling of his pay. Mounties soon caught up with him at the St. Mary's River, and placed him under arrest. While in the Macleod guard house, Thornton agreed to return his ill-gotten wages, and was subsequently released two days later.¹⁰

A few days later, the Rangers' Scout and Recruiting Officer, John (Rattlesnake Jack) Robson was charged with having liquor in his possession, a charge that was fairly common in an era with an almost unenforceable set of prohibition laws. Jack was fined \$50 and court costs, and had his liquor destroyed.¹¹

In August, in appreciation of the Rangers service and to celebrate the return of the 20 mounted policemen of C Troop from their service with General Strange, a banquet and ball was held in their honor by the town of Macleod. Unfortunately, it is doubtful that many of the rough and tumble crew were around to attend the gala. Chairman of the banquet was Lord Boyle. He introduced the keynote speaker, Major John Stewart, who also had some choice words for charges inferred by General Middleton at the NWMP

*The toast of the "Rocky Mountain Rangers" called forth the speech of the evening, by Major Stuart [Stewart]. He referred to Col. Irving's [Irvine] high qualities both as a gentleman and a soldier, and spoke very feelingly of the scandalous charges which has been made against him. The noble work which the small body of police had done during the rebellion was touched upon, and the high state of efficiency eulogized. In speaking of the work done by the Rangers, Major Stuart said that it had been their bad fortune not to have any of the fighting to do. What duty they had done, however, everyone said had been done well, and every man among them had been willing and ready to go to the front, if they had been called upon to do so. He then went on to say that in this district a body of Mounted men could be raised superior to ANY CAVALRY IN THE DOMINION. He challenged the Eastern press to take this statement up and deny it.*¹²

Stewart returned to Winnipeg in September to appear before the War Claims Commission. The Major sought reimbursement of his own out-of-pocket expenses, and to explain some of the claims made by himself and several Macleod area merchants in relation to debts incurred on behalf of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. Most claims were approved for incidentals such as forage, knife-

sheaths and belts (250 were bought but Stewart only got paid for 111), gun slings, telegrams, railroad freight charges, waterproof slickers, express charges and hay forks. In all, \$5,836.50 worth of claims were made by Stewart in War Claim #26; he was reimbursed \$4,452, leaving Stewart holding the bill for over \$1,200 in incurred expenses. Among the items refused for payment included barracks furniture, stationary, toiletries, washtubs, crockery, apples and field glasses.¹³

Stewart also put in a claim for horses belonging to individual Rangers that were lost or injured during the campaign. In settling these claims, the War Commission constantly referred back to Stewart's own Carrying-Out Report, in which he had set out his own rules, regarding claims for mounts. Section 11 of Stewart's original report took quite a beating as the War Commission squirmed to save the government money owed for the replacement cost of these horses.¹⁴

W.C. No. 28. M & D. A.M. 2258. Rocky Mountain Rangers, 6 claims for horses lost and injured. These claims were considered as to their bearing on the special agreement of organization

No. 1, Trooper [Malcolm] MacNaught, horse lost, \$60.

No. 2, Trooper MacNaught, horse injured, \$60. Rejected, not coming under clause 11

No. 3, Trooper Robson, horse lost, \$60. Recommended for payment in full

No. 4, Trooper [James] Wheatley, horse injured, \$65. Rejected, not covered by clause 11

No. 5, Trooper [Thomas] Dawson, horse injured, \$60. Rejected, not covered by clause 11

*No. 6, Trooper [George] Mercier, horse lost, \$65. Recommended for payment in full.*¹⁵

As southern Alberta slowly returned to normal, the voters of the district were treated to one last battle of the Rocky Mountain Rangers. But this fight had little to do with the personal security of the inhabitants. The governing body of the North West Territories, the North West Council, had a vacancy and an election was held to fill the seat. When all nominations were closed, the two contenders were two Rangers veterans, Lord Richard Boyle and rancher George Canning Ives. For a month, citizens endured endless speeches and debates over who could best represent the ranche country, and the politics of how long ranchers could be expected to hold their grazing leases against the rising floodtide of settler farmers. In late September the election was held, and Lord Boyle won the position with a large

majority But it seems that most of the electorate could not have cared less, as only 134 people in the entire District of Alberta bothered to vote.¹⁶

The Rangers returned to the lives that they had previously known. Those who had received saddles and rifles from the government, like schoolteacher Arthur Edgar Cox, were allowed to retain them.¹⁷

Major Stewart did as much as he could for the Rangers in obtaining service recognition for his Corps. While in Ottawa, Stewart even took the opportunity to pose for the capital city's famous photographer, William J. Topley, in the uniform he wore as a Ranger. Complete with his wide brimmed hat, riding breeches, and blue Dragoon tunic, Topley had Stewart pose in front of a giant backdrop of a militia encampment, giving the illusion that the photo was taken in the field.¹⁸

In October, the Rangers received assistance from C.E.D. Wood when the *Gazette* editor published the contents of a pamphlet entitled *Volunteer Land Grants, Scrip and Pensions* by Captain C. W. Allen, that stated.

*In a comparatively small space a large amount of information is given in a clear and intelligible way, so that any of our militiamen who did service in the late campaign can learn what they are entitled to and how they may obtain it. Full and clear instructions are given how to obtain land grants and scrip, how most advantageously to realize the bounty, how the right to land or scrip may be transferred and on many other points in sections with appropriate titles. In the appendix, the late act granting land to members of the militia force on active service in the North West is given, also sections from the Dominion Lands Act bearing on the subject, together with valuable hints and useful forms. This pamphlet ought to prove a veritable deus ex machina to the thousand or two militiamen who are probably in doubts and difficulties over the perplexing and scattered regulations of the land office, and particularly so, the Rocky Mountain Rangers who are so far away from all valuable sources of information.*¹⁹

In this fashion, members of the Rangers and other commands were able to learn of the obligations due them by the federal government, which was not in any hurry to inform the veterans. In December of 1885, the Rocky Mountain Rangers finally got the announcement they were hoping for

Land Warrants for the R. M. Rangers.

Thanks to the exertions of Major Stewart at Ottawa, the way is now clear for the issue of scrip or land warrants to the rangers. The names are now on file at Ottawa, and upon

*application, the scrip or warrant will be issued. The application must be made either personally, or by some person issued with a power of attorney. Forms for the power of attorney can now be obtained at this [Macleod Gazette] office.*²⁰

The Rocky Mountain Rangers, 114 in all, and their service in the North West Rebellion was officially recognized, and all would receive the North West Medal. Their exemplary performance despite the hardships endured were finally acknowledged. Each Ranger was to receive the Rebellion Scrip, making him eligible for either an \$80 bonus or 320 acres of homestead land. Most chose the land, and settled in the Pincher Creek-Waterton area, as well as around Fort Macleod and Lethbridge. At least one took his homestead in the Cypress Hills. The homesteads allowed the ex-Rangers, many of whom were newcomers to the area, to stay and build a life of their own. They became pioneer farmers and small ranchers in southern Alberta, and many did very well.

As for the other major figures of the Rebellion, the losers did not fare well. But at least one of the victors came out very well, for a little while anyway

Louis Riel was taken to Regina and charged with treason. In a lengthy summer trial, Riel had dismissed his counsel and submitted his own defense, refusing to take the plea of insanity that would save his life. Riel was convicted of treason, and clemency for his sentence of death was left in the hands of Sir John A. Macdonald's cabinet. The ministers' decision led to a controversy that has threatened to split this country ever since. The vocal politicians and activists of Quebec pleaded for clemency on the basis that Riel was seen as a target of Protestant, English speaking Ontario. On November 14, a decision was made and on November 17, the would-be savior of the North West was hanged in the Regina NWMP Barracks.

Gabriel Dumont was the man the Rocky Mountain Rangers had missed as he rode through the Cypress Hills to Montana. After his release from Fort Assiniboine, Dumont travelled the Metis camps. Making his base in Lewiston, Dumont spent five months gathering funds, horses and support for a jailbreak of his leader, Louis Riel. Dumont was even reported in Regina once, but always escaped capture. After Riel's execution and the death of his wife Madeline Dumont, Gabriel accepted an offer from William (Buffalo Bill) Cody to join his Wild West show. After leaving the show, he travelled the Dakotas and Montana, and even went on a speaking tour of eastern cities. In the late 1800s, Dumont was pardoned by the government and he returned to Batoche, taking residence in a cabin on the farm of his nephew. He died in 1906.



Glenbow Archives NA-1063-1

Gabriel Dumont brought Louis Riel out of his Montana exile to assist in the Métis' dealings with the government. When the situation led to war, Dumont marshalled the forces of allied Métis and natives. They ambushed General Middleton's column at Fish Creek for a small victory, but were later defeated by Middleton at the Batoche siege. Dumont escaped to Montana where he was arrested by the U.S. Army at Fort Assiniboine, near the present site of Havre. Later he was released by order of President Grover Cleveland. Dumont made hopeless plans to rescue Riel from his Regina jail cell, and later he accepted employment as a trick shooter in Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West show.

Big Bear and Poundmaker were taken to Regina and ordered to stand trial. Big Bear's warrior council, including Wandering Spirit and eight others that had precipitated the Frog Lake Massacre, were convicted of murder and hanged. The two Cree leaders who had done much to keep the bloodshed down, were seen by the government as the co-conspirators of the now-hated Louis Riel. They faced charges of treason-felony, levying war against the Queen, and instigating rebellion. In the end, both leaders were convicted and sentenced to Stony Mountain Penitentiary. In jail, the two were model prisoners, Big Bear becoming a carpenter and Poundmaker a gardener, and both also enjoyed tending to the warden's private zoo. Poundmaker became sick within six months and the government, fearing an Indian leader of his stature dying inside

prison, released him. He moved to the reserve of his step-father Crowfoot, and in a few months he was dead. Big Bear was released two years later, also in failing health. He moved to the Little Pine Reserve and in a January, 1888 blizzard, passed away in his sleep.

Many of Big Bear's followers had moved into Montana following the reversals at Loon Lake. Among their leaders was Imasses, Big Bear's son. For more than ten years they lived a miserable existence and wandered throughout the Montana Territory, hated by white men and Indians alike. In 1896, all Canadian Crees were ordered to report to Fort Assiniboine for repatriation. Two companies of Black American 'Buffalo Soldiers' escorted 531 Indians and 1300 horses to the Canadian border, but most of the Crees turned back. Many made it into the Bear Paw Mountains before the cavalry troopers could catch them. The government never tried to deport them again. In 1916, amidst pressure from humanitarians including artist Charles M. Russell, the Crees were granted an American reservation, the Rocky Boy agency near Box Elder, Montana. Poundmaker's military leader, Fine Day, fared better. He moved to Montana, but eventually returned and in 1939, at the age of 90, greeted King George VI on his coronation tour of Canada.



Glenbow Archives NA-3205-11

An 1885 photo at Regina with captured Chiefs Big Bear and Poundmaker posing with a variety of individuals. In front, L to R, Horse Child (Big Bear's son), Big Bear, Alexander Stewart (the Police Chief of Hamilton, appointed by the government to present the charges to Rebellion participants), and Poundmaker. Standing L to R, NWMP Constable Black, Father Cochin, NWMP Inspector R. Burton Deane (later the Superintendent of the Lethbridge barracks), Father Andre, Beverly Robertson, interpreter.

The three Blackfoot leaders who held the balance in southern Alberta came out of the rebellion very well. In the fall of 1885 Crowfoot was visited by the Governor-General Lord Landsdowne, General Middleton, Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney, and in 1886 by Sir John A. Macdonald. Also in 1886, as a reward for their neutrality, the Blackfoot chiefs Crowfoot, Blood chief Red Crow, and Peigan leader North Axe (who had just succeeded his late father Eagle Tail) were sent on an eastern tour to visit the Capital, the Prime Minister, and to see cities like Montreal. After the tour, Red Crow and Crowfoot returned to face the

new reality on the reserves. Red Crow spent some time trying to quell infighting among the Blood band, and persuaded his people to send their children to the residential schools run by the churches, in order to learn English. Red Crow saw education as the survival of his people. Crowfoot tried a similar tact, and despite his failing health steered his people into agriculture and away from war with neighboring tribes. In 1890, Crowfoot died at Blackfoot Crossing, and was joined by his old friend Red Crow in 1896.



Provincial Archives Of Alberta P-200, H. Pollard Collection

In 1886, as a reward for their pledge of neutrality in the North West Rebellion, the Treaty No. 7 Chiefs were invited to tour eastern Canada. Shown here in Ottawa are seated on bench L to R, Three Bulls, Crowfoot and Red Crow. Standing behind them is the man who negotiated with Crowfoot, Father Albert Lacombe, and Interpreter Jean L'heureux.

Lieutenant-Colonel William Dillon Otter, despite being chastised by Middleton for his premature attack on Cut Knife Hill, would soon achieve the rank of Major-General. In 1899, he became the Commander of the First Canadian Contingent sent to South Africa for service in the Boer War. This made him the first Canadian-born officer to command the nation's forces. Otter was later knighted as a Knight Commander of the Bath, and died in Toronto in 1928.

Major-General Thomas Bland Strange was also slighted by Middleton, but Strange never thought much of Middleton anyway. In fact, it is said that Strange took command of the Alberta Field Force in order to irritate his old enemy. Strange and his son, Harry, continued to run the Military Colonization Company ranche near Gleichen, and today the locality of the ranche is known as Strangmuir. He later retired to England, where he died.

One of the most controversial figures of the Rebellion was its triumphant victor, Major-General Frederick Dobson Middleton. His Report On The Suppression Of the North West Rebellion did much to earn the enmity of many westerners. His scathing attack on Commissioner Acheson Irvine and the NWMP was hardly deserved, though it did much to tarnish the image of the force in the eastern press. During the Rebellion the General did something to a Metis trader that he would live to regret. Charles Bremner, a captive of Poundmaker, had been discovered with a rifle belonging to a slain policeman. After Bremner's arrest, Middleton seized the trader's furs and gave them to his officers as souvenirs. But Bremner was found not guilty, and he swore out a complaint against Middleton. By the time the case was discovered by the press in 1887 Middleton had been knighted, been given several medals, and \$20,000. As he looked forward to retirement as President of a Canadian insurance company, the scandal hit Parliament and ended his military career. He left Canada in disgrace, returning to England to be named Keeper Of the Crown Jewels in The Tower Of London.

In July 1886, the citizens of Pincher Creek held their annual Dominion Day celebrations in the form of a sports day. Among the events was a mile long horse race won by Fred Austin's horse Pedro. Lionel Brooke's steed Priest placed second. Also featured was a mounted smoking race where participants were to race at full gallop and attempt to light a cigar. Other horse races included a half-mile dash, an Indian cayuse race, a 200 yard dash, and a steeplechase. Several foot races were also held, as well as a tug-of-war and a rifle competition won by the Macleod photographers, William and George Anderton, with fierce competition from former Ranger George Canning Ives. Indeed, the event was attended by all of the ex-Rangers, who competed fiercely with each other and proved that their riding and shooting skills were still up to snuff. But the highlight of the day for the assembled Rebellion veterans was described in the July 6, 1886 edition of the *Macleod Gazette*:

Perhaps the most interesting and unique part of Thursdays proceedings was the presentation of The Rebellion Medals by Mrs. Macleod to the Pincher Creek home guard, and those of the active service Mountain Rangers present. Capt. Herron mustered his old command early in the morning, and proceeded with them to the residence of Lieut. Col. Macleod. Here the troop was drawn up for escort duty, and Col. and Mrs. Macleod drove up with a four horse team, accompanied by their guard of honor. After the party had alighted at the Marquee, the troop drew up in line fronting them, having gone through a few preliminary movements in a most creditable manner. Col. Macleod, accompanied by Major Stewart, went

down to the line, and addressed a few words to the men in his well known happy style. The Colonel thanked them for the honor they had done Mrs. Macleod in asking her to present the medals, and assured them of her thorough appreciation of it. He continued, saying, that it would have added much to the impressiveness of the occasion if some of them had appeared to receive their medals without an arm or a leg. He did not suppose, however, that it would have been particularly interesting for the mangled heroes. He said that the presentation of the medal was of special interest and significance. They had all felt how difficult it was to learn their drill, and what a long time it took, but though they might forget their drill, one thing they all knew how to do, and that was their duty. That is the great thing for a soldier to know. He assured them that the presentation of the medal was a royal mark of the Queen's great appreciation of the way they had performed their duty. He believed that there were a number of Americans in their ranks. He wished to particularly express his satisfaction at the way they had come forward to protect the honor of the Queen. He felt certain that the Americans who belonged to the Rocky Mountain Rangers would cherish this mark of Her Majesty's favor. He hoped they would live long to wear the medal which the Queen had conferred upon them, and that they would always be ready to serve Her. The Colonel said that it was usual to have the names of the officers and men on the medals. He was very glad, however, that they had not been put on these for it would give him [Col. Macleod] an opportunity of having the names of the officers and men engraved on the medals, and if Major Stewart would allow him, he would have it done. It would be a source of great gratification to him.

The men then dismounted and came forward one at a time to receive the medals from Mrs. Macleod, who pinned them on the coats of the recipients, saying something pleasant to each one.

The Medal, which is a very handsome one, has the Queen's head on one side, while on the other are the words "Northwest, Canada, 1885," enclosed in a wreath of maple leaves. It is suspended from the breast by a red and blue striped medal [actually a ribbon]

Three rousing cheers were given for the Queen, the Dominion of Canada, the Rocky Mountain Rangers, and Lt.-Col. Macleod, the escort reformed and accompanied Col. and Mrs. Macleod home, and the crowd which must have numbered some 300 of the beauty and chivalry of the southwestern portion of Alberta dispersed

for lunch, well pleased with the opening part of the programme and eager for the sports of the afternoon, which promised to be both interesting and exciting ²¹

With the medal and a scrip good for a half-section of Alberta land, the Rocky Mountain Rangers dispersed to continue with their lives.

Old Rangers fade away, .and what became of them.

The period of service of the Rocky Mountain Rangers lasted no longer than four months, but the individuals that comprised the unit lived on as a microcosm of the type of people who made up southern Alberta. The Riel Rebellion was the last violent political upheaval western Canada would see, but there was no indication that the men of the Rangers were sorry to see the era pass.

Henry Boyle soon returned to England, becoming a lawyer. His brother, **Lord Richard Boyle**, continued his adventures in the west. He continued his interest in the Alberta Ranche, and threw himself into his new position as a member of the North West Council representing the Macleod District. Lord Richard resigned his term in 1887 and travelled throughout the west. Upon the death of his father in that same year, Richard was slated to assume the elder Boyle's estate and title as the 6th Earl of Shannon. But the budding nobleman could not be found, and it was thought for a time that he was dead. At one point, letters pinpointed him as being in Australia. Concerned, Henry sailed to New York, and launched a continent-wide search. The worried brother began his search, feeling that Richard could be in British Columbia. A letter from a U.S. Marshall in Juneau, Alaska placed Boyle there, saying that he was headed into the Yukon River to stake a gold claim. Another letter put him in Sitka, Alaska. A miner arriving back in Victoria, B.C. confirmed the sightings of Lord Boyle panning for gold on the Yukon. At one point, he was feared dead and from here the stories got wilder, putting him in the diamond fields of South Africa and in Bengal, hunting tigers. Newspapers throughout the continent carried the story of Lord Boyle's disappearance, and eventually the story caught up with its subject in Idaho. Lord Richard telegraphed his brother and the two were reunited in New York City. Looking quite well and tanned, the nobleman turned frontiersman claimed that he had spent the last two years hunting and fishing in Idaho. The Boyle brothers returned to the British Isles, and Lord Richard assumed his nobleman's duties as the Earl of Shannon. Richard died in 1910 and Henry in 1908.¹

Duncan Campbell lived in Fort Macleod until his death in 1920. He was always active in civic affairs in the town, including a long term as Sheriff of the Judicial District of Macleod, until 1914. He was a true civic leader, serving as a director of the Macleod Improvement Company, an endeavour designed to raise funds to supply the town with water, drainage and fire protection. Campbell also served on town



City of Lethbridge Archives P19770285034

Duncan John D'Urban Campbell, prominent Fort Macleod businessman and civic politician remained active in attempting to raise a local militia. He also was one of many to petition for responsible government in the west, leading to the birth of the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

councils, hospital and school boards, the Turf Association, the Western Canada Stock Growers Association, and the Macleod Exhibition. Campbell also helped petition Ottawa for some form of responsible self-government in western Canada, a movement that would eventually culminate in the creation of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. In 1894 D.J. Campbell married Eleanor Wood of Halifax, who had some very distinguished relatives. Her father, Captain John Taylor Wood, had commanded the Confederate ship, the *Tallahassee*, in the American Civil War. Her great-uncle was the former President of the Confederate States of America, Jefferson Davis, and her great-grandfather was Zachary Taylor, the 12th President of the United States. Campbell likely met Eleanor through her brother, Zack Taylor Wood, a

Mountie who was a close confidante of one-time Fort Macleod commander Sam Steele. Still interested in military matters, Campbell commanded for a short time in 1901, H Squadron of the Canadian Mounted Rifles. Later, he was a Major in the 15th Light Horse, which was shortly disbanded. Campbell also commanded the 23rd Alberta Rangers until 1911.²

William F. Powell returned to Ottawa to resume his military career, and in 1896, became Chief of Police for the City of Ottawa.³

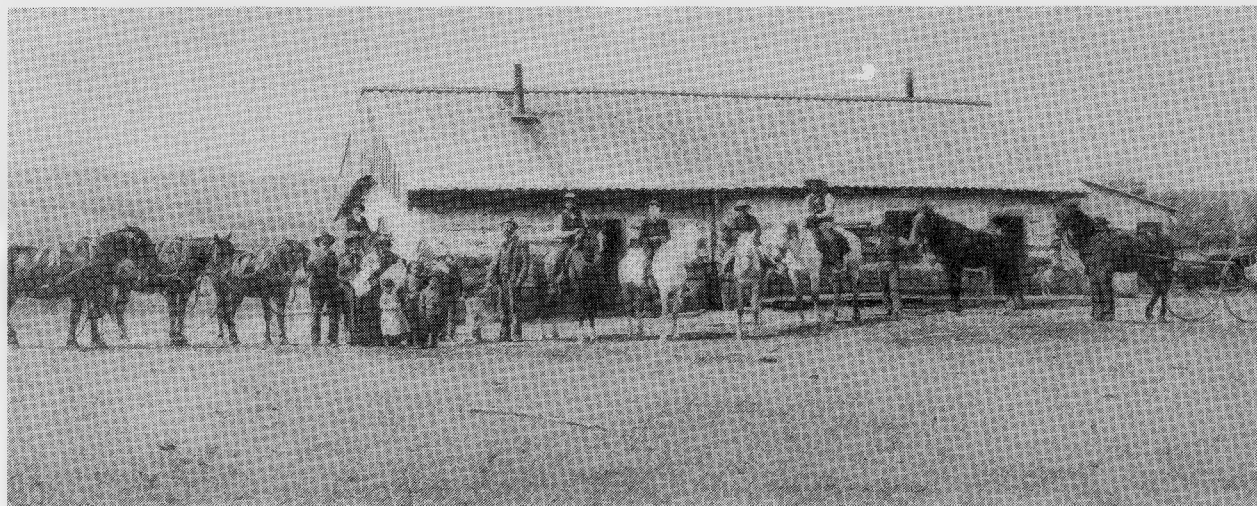
Historians should be grateful for the volume of information that exists on **Charley (Jughandle) Smith** and his wife, Marie Rose. Marie Rose Smith (nee Delorme) spent her later years recollecting her and her family's history in a series of columns she wrote for *The Canadian Cattleman*, entitled *Eighty Years On The Plains*. Marie also passed down many stories to her children and grandchildren. One of those granddaughters was Lethbridge writer Jock Carpenter, who recounted the memoirs in her 1977 work *Fifty Dollar Bride*. Charley continued to ranche on the Jughandle, and the pair were blessed with seventeen children. Smith was a good friend of Kootenai Brown, and the two families often visited each other as Charley and Kootenai played cards and shared a drink. In his later years, Charley sold his cattle and began raising racehorses. In 1914 Charley died, then two sons died in 1917, when they were killed on the battlefields of France in World War I. Marie Rose lived to be 98 years old and contented herself with leather work, leading to her nickname of Buckskin Mary. She died in 1960.⁴

William Allen Hamilton and his wife Verny Marie lived life very much the same as they had before the rebellion. Verny Marie, who had worked as a nurse in the Rebellion, went to Montana for a

time to take care of her ailing step-mother Madeline Dumont, since Gabriel Dumont was in exile there. After Madeline's death, Verny Marie returned to Macleod. The Hamiltons had six children. Verny Marie died in 1913 and was said to be buried in Macleod, but investigations have yet to reveal the grave. William continued to ranche and freight. He died in 1941, and is buried in Calgary.⁵

Albert Connelly stayed in Pincher Creek, operating the Alberta Hotel. In 1891 he married Elizabeth Reardon, with whom he had five children. In 1892 Connelly took out a homestead northwest of present-day Lundbreck, where he helped organize the Lee School District. A log cabin used as the school was still on Connelly's original homestead in 1974. Somewhere along the line Connelly opened a butcher shop in Blairmore, cutting and selling his own beef to the lumber mills. Later, he sold the business to the Lynch-Stauntons. Albert Connelly continued to ranche on his homestead until his death on November 20, 1908. Connelly Creek, a tributary of the Crowsnest River was named after the pioneering family.⁶

Frank LeVasseur drove for a time with the Stewart stagecoach line between Pincher and Lethbridge, and sub-contracted the line under the name LeVasseur & Steadman. Later, he settled on homestead land east of Pincher Creek (possibly his Rebellion Scrip land) with his brother George, where they raised horses and had a racetrack on their property. The brothers also dug the first irrigation ditch in the area and installed headgates on Pincher Creek. However, the plan was ill-fated as the gates washed out and the resulting flood forever altered the course of the creek. In 1895, LeVasseur married Kate Gallagher. Around the turn of the century, he sold his holdings to J.A. Sandgren. Upon Frank's death in 1930, Kate and their son moved to Hawaii.⁷



Glenbow Archives NA-2539-5

Charley Smith's Jughandle Ranche at Pincher Creek, named after Smith's unusual way of marking his cattle for identification. While Charley raised the cattle, hunted wolves, drank, and raced horses, Marie-Rose raised their seventeen children and made leather clothing for her family and neighbors, earning her the nickname of Buckskin Mary. The Jughandle was a popular spot for many Pincher Creek locals including Kootenai Brown and his wife, Nechemouse.

Sam Sharpe, besides operating the Jones & Sharpe Rancho, received his half-section of homestead land for his part in the North West Rebellion, and took it out ten miles west of Pincher Creek. He called the place The Willows Rancho. Sharpe met and married Emma Clarke, a young Englishwoman from London, who had come west to live with her sister Sarah Clarke Hinton (wife of rancher Frank Hinton). They were wed in 1888. The Sharpes like many ranchers, felt sympathy for local Peigan and Stoney Indians, having watched much of the deprivation on the Reserves. Native families often visited, and Sam was noted for giving away supplies such as flour, salt, tea, meat, and even Emma's freshly baked bread. Two children were born to the Sharpes, Wallace James and Ethel Sarah. The Willows Rancho was noted for the frequent visits of English remittance men, who, upon receiving their stipends, would arrive at the Willows with liquor and play poker with the jugs as winnings. In 1898, nine year old Wallace was sent to town to seek medical aid for the ailing Sam Sharpe. But he did not get back in time, and his father died. Two years later, Emma remarried Wallace Eddy. She died in Pincher Creek in 1950.⁸

John Rogers Davis continued hauling lumber to Macleod with his brother, Samuel Davis. Eventually, John turned to developing his farm, across the river from Hardieville. In 1891, Davis used his irrigation experience from California, to construct a water wheel in the Oldman River to water his garden and hay crops. A stone pier was built in the river, and a wheel utilizing powder-kegs for buckets was developed. When he tried it out, the wheel was found to be too small for the volume of water required. The day after his wheel's trial run, spring floods swept Davis' invention away. Undaunted, the would-be engineer took out an ambitious ten-thousand acre lease from the North West Coal & Navigation Company, near the town of Stirling. Irrigation on his mind, Davis built a dam across a coulee and backed up water to flood-irrigate his hay. The first year Davis did well, and the plan was flawless. Built in 1893, disaster struck when the dam broke and over half a mile of the railroad's Lethbridge-Great Falls line was swept away. John Davis' plan to rebuild the dam was halted when the NWC & N Co. filed a court injunction against his project. In 1890, John Davis married Alice Maria Perry, daughter of English ranchers, in a double ceremony shared with Alice's brother. In an unspecified accident John Davis lost his eyesight in 1897, and Alice along with their three children was forced to carry on the ranchwork. On November 26, 1907 John Rogers Davis died suddenly of a heart attack. After his death, Alice purchased another half-section of land in the West Lethbridge area, and built a store in Coalhurst. She married an Edmonton engineer in 1917, and they moved to Hazelton, Pennsylvania. Alice returned to Lethbridge in 1927, residing there until her death in 1956.⁹

Lionel Brooke stayed in Pincher Creek, courtesy of his family's quarterly remittance payments. Brooke continued to live a feast or famine lifestyle. Finding his fortunes down, he would move in with whatever rancher would have him. As payment for room and board, Brooke would paint door or wall murals in his hosts' homes, featuring a wide variety of wildlife. Two murals still exist in the Pincher Creek museum. Several inheritances came to him from his English relatives, and when Brooke would receive one he would usually pack up and head off to some exotic locale, such as Hawaii or San Francisco. He apparently once commissioned a taxi driver to take him from Victoria to Pincher Creek, a distance of over 1,500 miles, and cheerfully paid the thousand dollar fare. Pincher Creek lost one of its great eccentrics when Lionel Brooke died in the 1930s, well into his eighties.¹⁰

John Brown and his wife continued to raise thoroughbreds near Pincher Creek. Two nieces, Cecelia and Frances Eastman came out from England to lend a hand. The Eastman girls were noted for their English-style riding techniques, including the use of side saddles. In later years, the Browns sold their holdings to the Dancey brothers and lived out their years in the Mother country.¹¹

James H. Schofield ran his store in Pincher Creek together with Henry Hyde. In 1886, the Hudson's Bay Company bought the two out and Schofield lost the coin toss to decide who would manage the new Bay outlet. Heading into the hills, Schofield founded the Marna Rancho with its Y6 brand. One of his hands was a newcomer named Thomas Herron Scott, John Herron's cousin. In 1888, he married a Blood Reserve schoolteacher, Edyth McClement, formerly of Kingston, Ontario. In 1894, Schofield opened another store in Pincher Creek and his business acumen led to a very successful mercantile career. In 1898, with the arrival of the CPR Crowsnest line, he took over a mens' clothing store in Fort Macleod, began another in Cranbrook, B.C., opened a general store in Cowley, and a sheet metal business in Pincher Creek. Through the years, Schofield sponsored and managed several local football and hockey teams. He built a new store in Pincher in 1905, and in 1911 sold everything and moved his family back to his hometown of Brockville, Ontario. He didn't stay in the east long. Soon he was back in his Pincher Creek home, and alternated winters between the rancho country, Calgary and California. In 1928, the ex-Mountie, ex Ranger, cowboy and trader finally retired to Victoria, and passed away in January 1939, at the age of 81. Edyth Schofield died in 1953.¹²

George Canning Ives split up his ranching partnership with Sam Sharpe in the summer of 1885, and ended up with the rancho buildings. He also ran unsuccessfully against Lord Boyle for a seat on the

North West Council. Ives' son William was raised on the ranche, and later went on to study law in Quebec. When he returned, 'Billy' Ives led a distinguished career, eventually rising to the position of Provincial Chief Justice. Ives was better known as 'the Cowboy Judge' for his heritage, and his courtroom style.¹³

John Stewart's partner, **James Christie** became involved in the coal mining business, and in 1882 brought out his brother Andrew from Ontario to work a ridge in the Beauvais Lake area for coal deposits. The Christie Mine became one of the most successful small mines in the area. In 1891, Jim Christie pulled out of the Stewart Ranche and moved to Nose Creek, north of Calgary, settling with one hundred horses and as many head of cattle. In 1894, Christie was killed near Calgary when he was thrown from his wagon.¹⁴

Alfred Hardwick Lynch-Staunton was joined in his ranche endeavours by his brothers, Richard arriving in 1885, and Charles in 1896. They ran a ranche north of Lundbreck and operated a chain of butcher shops, the 4-1 Meat Market in Pincher Creek, Lundbreck, Blairmore, and Fernie, B.C. The brothers operated their Antelope Butte Ranche and became leading citizens of the community. They were charter members of the Western Stock Growers Association and staunch supporters of the Conservative party. As members of the North Fork Livestock Association, the Lynch-Stauntons pioneered the grazing of cattle in forest reserves by sending their herds into the Oldman River Gap. They also contracted to put up hay for the NWMP. Alfred Hardwick died in 1932. One descendant of the dynasty, Frank Lynch-Staunton, became the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta in 1979. The Antelope Butte Ranche is still operated by the family.¹⁵

John Henry Gresham Bray suffered the devastating loss of his cattle herds in the winter of 1887, and was nearly wiped out. In 1892, he received an appointment as foreman of Public Works in Medicine Hat, and moved his family there. Bray became comfortable in the new city, and ranched north of the river in an area called Bray's Flat. He also became involved in gathering buffalo bones to sell to the railroad for fertilizer. Bray became a civic leader and served on many agricultural and stock associations. As an experienced cattleman, Bray advised the Medicine Hat area people on cattle related problems such as theft, rustlers, mavericks, fires, and the organization of round-ups. In 1896, he was named as the Territorial (and later Provincial) Brand Inspector. John Bray died in 1923.¹⁶

Arthur Edgar Cox took his land grant east of Pincher Creek and established the Mount View Ranche, all the while continuing in his job as school teacher. In 1887, Cox married Mary Elizabeth

Willock, the sister of fellow Ranger Les Willock. Cox also established a church in town. In 1897, he became the Dominion Land Agent, and in that capacity sometimes fought his fellow ranchers, to wrest control of leased grazing land for homestead grants. He also worked as an agent for the Calgary & Edmonton Railway, and the Hudson's Bay Company.¹⁷ His house stands today in the park of the Pincher Creek Museum.

Henry Ernest Hyde continued as the Pincher Creek postmaster, and held that position until 1905. In 1886, the Schofield and Hyde general store was bought out by the Hudson Bay Company. In September 1889 Hyde opened a private banking service, and soon after accepted the position of manager of the Union Bank, the town's first. He carried out his banking business from a refitted log stable, and a new building was built in 1907. Hyde refused further promotion in the bank, as he did not want to leave Pincher Creek. He soon reopened his own finance and loan company, and operated it until his retirement. He married in Lethbridge, on July 10, 1896 to a schoolteacher named Miss E.M. Chisholm. She died in 1902, of complications due to the birth of their second child. In September, 1905, Hyde married Miss Jean Innes. During World War I Hyde administered the government Patriotic Fund, a federal plan to provide financial assistance to widows and orphans of servicemen killed in the war. In 1918, Hyde served one term as mayor of Pincher Creek. He died in 1933.¹⁸

Thomas Hinton, whose first experiences in the Pincher Creek area were with the Rocky Mountain Rangers, went into business with Timothy Lebel and built and opened a general store in the town. Two years later, the pair split up and Hinton built a hardware store across the street. At about the same time he brought his wife, Lucy Smart, over from England as well as three brothers, Frank, Arthur and Joe. Hinton eventually sold the store to Sam and George Barry.¹⁹

When Lebel and Hinton dissolved their partnership, **Charles Kettles** filled the vacuum and joined Lebel in the store. He also operated a butcher shop and slaughter house. He and his wife Elizabeth parented four children, and descendants live in Pincher Creek to this day. In fact, Charles Kettles' brand, the 70, is believed to be the oldest continuously registered brand still held by the same family in Alberta. A leading citizen, Kettles served twenty years on the local school board, and from 1909-1911, as town councillor. Charles Kettles retired in 1906, and died in 1923 at 71 years of age. Elizabeth Anderson Kettles died in 1932.²⁰

What is known of **James R. Scott** is that he was married on August 30, 1886 to a Miss Morrow at the Macleod Methodist Church. The best man was none other than Donald Watson Davis, the ex-whiskey

trader turned respectable merchant and federal politician. The wedding feast and party were hosted by another whiskey trader gone legit, Harry (Kamoose) Taylor, at his infamous Macleod Hotel.²¹

The one-legged cowboy from the Stewart Ranche, **James T. Routledge**, committed suicide. No other details were related.²²

William J. Patterson was married to a Miss Agnes Niven at Lethbridge in 1893.²³

Frederick Charles Inderwick continued to ranche on the North Fork, and became politically active, serving as an officer in various stock organizations. Inderwick eventually sold his interests and turned to operating a tea plantation in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).²⁴

Peter McEwen carried on with ranching, freighting and raising his three remaining sons. His wife, Mary Gladstone McEwen, died in 1890. In 1894, McEwen was married to an unidentified woman who had come west to work as a nanny for the Clarkson family. After the turn of the century, he sold his ranche to a man named Tench and took up a homestead near Cowley. This homestead is possibly one granted him for his service in the North West Rebellion. Within three years, he was granted patent on the land and moved in to Cowley, where he opened up a livery stable, while his wife ran a restaurant and bakery. The McEwens had four more children. During World War I Peter served with the Home Guards at Banff, and was posted to the Kananaskis P.O.W. Detention Camp. He spent his twilight years around Cowley as a freight hauler and as foreman on several haying outfits. He died at 73 in 1929 after a brief illness. Mrs. McEwen moved to Gibsons' Landing, B.C. in 1934. She later returning to Pincher Creek, diing there in 1961.²⁵

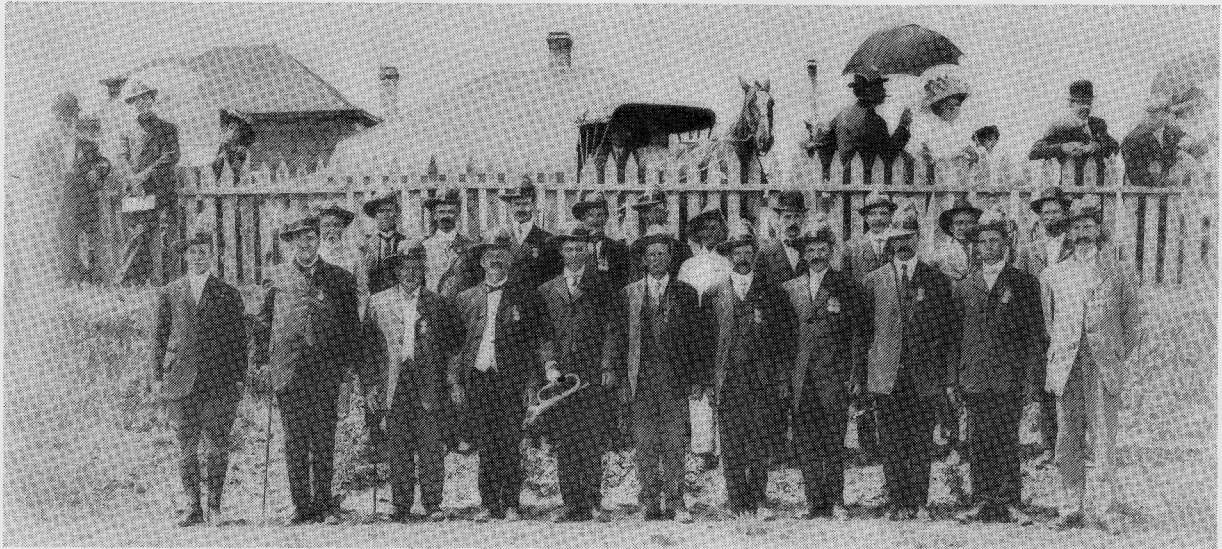
William R. Lees resigned from the Maclaren sawmill in 1888 and went into the ranching business near Mountain Mills, with Mill Creek as the south boundary of his open range. With the coming of barbed wire, he cut down on his range and tried farming. Later moving into Pincher Creek, he was noted as being the area's first owner of a Model T Ford. William Lees' date of death is uncertain. What is known is that his name died with him. Both of his sons were killed in tragic accidents. Billie drowned in Mill Creek, Gerald died in an air crash in Lake Champlain (or possibly Champaign. Ill.), near Chicago.²⁶

David Joseph (Joe) Wylie went in an opposite direction from his compatriots, into the Cypress Hills. After his service with the Rangers, he became a manager of one of the many farms operated by Sir John Lister Kaye at Kincorth, west of Maple Creek. In 1889, Joe married an English girl from Oxfordshire, Rachel Botterhill. As farm manager,

Wylie was responsible for eighteen thousand sheep and a large grain farm. When Lister Kaye's farming operation went broke, he moved to Hay Creek, and worked on a ranche there. In 1896, Wylie obtained financing from brothers and friends in England, and formed the Maple Creek Cattle Company. He purchased the Oxarat ranche south of the Cypress Hills from the widow of the Basque sheepherder Michael Oxarat, who had recently died on a trip to France. In 1905, Saskatchewan became a province and Wylie became a Conservative member of the very first legislature. Wylie became an ardent proponent for the maintenance of the open range leasing system, a losing battle in an era when the government of Wilfred Laurier was seeking to fill the prairies with homesteaders. In 1916, Joe bought out the interests of the Maple Creek Cattle Company and operated it as the Lazy Double H Ranche until his death in 1932. Joe Wylie's son, Monty carried the ranche on until 1948.²⁷

Edward Neale Barker continued on the Cochrane Ranche and took his land warrant out on a spot near Lee's Creek, close to where the town of Cardston was to spring up. He built a log cabin and was soon joined by a pair of cowboys named Donovan and Dunn. The three established a line camp for the Cochrane. Barker was there when a wagon train from Utah pulled in, led by the Mormon leader Charles Ora Card. While the new arrivals began to tear up the prairie, Barker and Donovan ran a sheep herd and sold the mutton produced to the Mormons, Mounties, and coal miners at Lethbridge. E.N Barker in 1889 married Clara Dusenberry, and the pair moved to her home state of New York and later to Georgia. Barker worked a small farm in New York state, but poor health forced them out and they spent a year in England. In 1905, the Barkers moved back to Cardston and in 1907, E.N. was named Collector of Customs and Justice of the Peace. Upon the death of his wife, Barker moved to Edmonton, to work for a year on a newspaper. In 1917, he was named a police magistrate and covered the district from Vulcan to Cardston and as far east as Foremost. Barker tried to retire to England, but was back for the building of the Prince Of Wales Hotel in Waterton in 1926. Not one to settle down, E.N. spent some years in Victoria, and finally retired to Hants, England where he died at the age of 83 on November 25, 1942.²⁸

Dr L. G. De Veber, the unit's Surgeon, continued his medical practice, first at Macleod and later in the new town of Lethbridge. He worked out of the Galt Hospital and also took in a partner, Dr Peter McGregor Campbell, the founder of the Campbell Clinic. An active Liberal, Dr De Veber was elected to the North West Assembly in 1898, and again in 1902. In 1905, he became a member for Lethbridge in the Province of Alberta's first legislature, and was in Premier A.C. Rutherford's



City of Lethbridge Archives P19760217013

A reunion of Boer War veterans at the Lethbridge Athletic Grounds sometime in the early part of the 20th century. Among the identified are Brown Pipes, Joe Figgins and Pat Egan. The large man 2nd from left in the front row with the cane is Dr. L. G. De Veber, proudly wearing his 1885 North West Rebellion Campaign medal, indicating that the gathering may have been a military affair. Directly behind Dr. De Veber stands an unidentified man who greatly resembles an aging John Herron.

first cabinet as a Minister Without Portfolio. He soon was appointed to Ottawa as a Senator. The good doctor was an avid sportsman, belonging to several shooting clubs and was an enthusiastic hunter and fisherman. In 1923, the De Vebers moved to Ottawa, but retained their home in Lethbridge. Doctor L.G. De Veber died on July 9, 1925. Rachel De Veber died in 1944. Mount De Veber is named after the good doctor.²⁹

Edward Gilpin Brown married Laura Boulton of Toronto and decided to cap his illustrious career by joining the North West Mounted Police. On February 8, 1894, he was appointed an Inspector, and served with the force right up until the change of name to Royal North West Mounted Police in 1904. On December 20 of that year, he died of a heart attack. His service record states that he had just returned from an assignment in Quebec. He was survived by an unspecified number of children.³⁰

John Herron continued as the foreman on the Stewart Ranch, and in 1886 served as President of the Canadian North West Territories Stock Association. Two years later he started his own ranche operation, and also served as a government Stock Inspector until 1904. In 1896 the Macleod-Pincher Creek area was again alarmed by Indian troubles, as a Blood Indian named Charcoal began a reign of terror, eluding the NWMP at every turn. After a string of shootings and a murder, Charcoal was spotted in the Pincher Creek area, and John Herron volunteered as part of the manhunt for the outlaw. About that time, the fugitive shot and killed Sergeant William Brock Wilde. Forming a citizens' posse, Herron tracked the killer to the North Fork of the Oldman River, and found himself confronting Charcoal across the river. Herron fired several



City of Lethbridge Archives P 19770285007

The Captain of the No. 3 Troop, Rocky Mountain Rangers, John Herron, became a leading rancher in the Pincher Creek region, and served as President of the Canadian North West Territory Stock Association. Herron was the Dominion Stock Inspector until 1904 when he was elected to Parliament as Conservative Member for the Alberta riding, later to be re-aligned into the Macleod riding.

rounds at the outlaw, but he escaped and was soon caught near the Blood Reserve. About the turn of the century, John Herron's younger brother Peter Herron came west and set up a homestead in the Pincher Creek area. John Herron topped his career as a Conservative Member Of Parliament, first elected for the Alberta riding in 1904. In 1908, he was re-elected in the re-aligned riding of Macleod. In 1911, Herron ran for the Conservative party on the issue of Reciprocity with the United States which Herron personally backed, despite his party's

opposition. The leader, Sir Robert Borden came west to campaign, and stopped in Macleod to endorse Herron. The gesture did not help, and Herron was defeated by Liberal candidate David Warnock. In 1912, John Herron attended the first Calgary Stampede as an original member of the North West Mounted Police, all of whom were in 1874 uniform. In 1924, Herron also made it to another reunion of the original policemen, in Macleod as the town celebrated its 50th Anniversary. He died at Pincher Creek in 1936.³¹

Unfortunately, the colourful scouts, **Rattlesnake Jack Robson** and **Aaron A. Vice** have slipped through the cracks of history. Robson does not show up until March 9, 1888 when in Battleford NWMP police reports, he was accused of selling intoxicating liquor, and was fined \$50 and court costs.³² Aaron A. Vice married in Lethbridge and adopted two children. He died in July of 1891 of heart disease, and was buried in a service performed by The Knights Of Pythias, a lodge of which he was a member.³³

While with the Rangers in the Cypress Hills, **John (Kootenai) Brown** met and took in an Assiniboine Indian woman named Blue Flash Of Lightning, or as Kootenai more often referred to her, Nechemouse (there are several variations of the spelling). Most area residents referred to her as Isabella. As his wife and companion, Isabella was devoted to the old mountain man, and was very adept at hunting, butchering meat, curing and tanning hides. She accompanied him often on his hunting and fishing trips, and held down the fort when Kootenai would do occasional scouting work for the NWMP, training and grazing their horses. In 1887, Kootenai guided Sam Steele and a company of police through the Crowsnest Pass on their return from assignment at Kootenai Landing. In 1895 he ended his service with the Police, and began to fight to have his beloved Kootenai Lakes set aside as a National Park. For this battle, Brown recruited several allies including his fellow former Ranger, John Herron, now the Conservative MP for the area, as well as Cowley rancher F W Godsall and the tart-tongued editor of the *Macleod Gazette*. On May 30, 1895, the government set aside the Kootenay Forest Reserve.

Kootenai accidentally created a new industry when he discovered oil seepages on Cameron Creek and helped develop Alberta's first oil well. Together with William Aldridge, a Mormon farmer from Cardston, they collected the oil into gallon jars and sold it to local farmers for wagon axle grease. Soon, speculators began bringing in drilling equipment but the boom did not last, as profitable production could not be sustained due to the inaccessibility of the Oil City area, as it had come to be known. In January of 1901, a hint of government help in the fight for a National Park



Glenbow Archives NA-2539-19

John George (Kootenai) Brown in 1883. After gaining his military land grant near Waterton Lake, Kootenai chose an Assiniboine wife, Nechemouse. He scouted for the NWMP and guided wealthy sportsmen into the Rocky Mountains. An ardent conservationist, he lobbied the federal government for the creation of a wildlife preserve which would later become Waterton Lakes National Park. Kootenai also aided in the developing of an oil well on Cameron Creek, the first commercial oil find in Alberta.

appeared when Kootenai was appointed fishery officer for the reserve. In 1910, at the age of 71, he was named forest ranger for the Kootenay Forest Reserve, and harassed the government constantly to have the Reserve expanded. Finally, in 1911, the Kootenay Forest Reserve became a National Park after sixteen years of struggle. However, the name

of the Park, Lake and River that Brown had lived on for so many years was renamed from Kootenai, to Waterton. In 1914, the park was enlarged to 423 square miles. As a forest Ranger, Kootenai was responsible for supervision of road building, trail cutting, and fighting forest fires. But when Waterton required a full time superintendent, Brown was passed over due to his advanced age. On July 18, 1916, John George (Kootenai) Brown passed away in his sleep. He bequeathed all possessions to Isabella. The legend was buried beside his beloved Waterton Lake between his first wife Olivia, and later, Isabella.³⁴

Major John Stewart, the man who had trained his entire life for the military and had organized three militia troops in his career, one during war time, never saw a battle. Fortunately, he was a little luckier in business, and his ranche made the papers several times in 1886. He made at least two trips into Montana for business consultations with one of his American partners, R. S. Ford. In 1887, he gained another partner of sorts when he married Isabel Skead, daughter of the late Ottawa lumber baron and politician James Skead. The service was held at St. Andrews church in Ottawa. Stewart's best man was none other than Superintendent Lief Crozier, the Mountie whose troops had fired the first shots of the North West Rebellion.³⁵ The couple went west immediately after their wedding, and resided in Calgary, in a gothic style cottage at 26 New Street S.E., an elegant home on the Bow River that still stands today.

Stewart also suffered business reversals. In 1886, he lost the mail contract on his stage lines. But the biggest shock came when he tried to purchase lands in Calgary for the purpose of land speculation, hoping to make a profit from the coming railroad. In 1883, Stewart had purchased land east of the Elbow River in Section 14 from Cecil Denny for ten thousand dollars, and started to survey the Section into town lots. The CPR however, began to lay out lots in Section 15, west of the Elbow. Soon Stewart was competing with the railroad, and his firm, the Denny Land Estate Company offered lots for sale both east and west of the Elbow. To sweeten the deal, he made lots available to schools or churches at no cost, planned for a park, and used contacts to sell to reputable folks like Colonel James Macleod. He even offered to finance the building of a bridge across the Elbow. But the CPR had the advantage in the end, and to promote their own lots, placed the railroad station on their own property on the west side of the Elbow, ensuring that Section 15 would become the hub of town, leaving Stewart with his property on the wrong side of the river. But the Captain didn't really lose, as he had already made back six times his original investment in the section.³⁶



Glenbow Archives, NA-1724-2

Mrs. Isabel Skead Stewart, daughter of the wealthy Ottawa valley lumber baron, James Skead. John Stewart and 'Bell', as he called her were married in 1887 in an elegant wedding attended by the Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, and witnessed by NWMP Supt. Lief Crozier. She and Stewart built an elegant home on the Bow River; the pair were high in the social and business circles of early Calgary. The marriage was short, as Stewart passed away in 1893.

Stewart and his brother, Macleod, also held investments in a coal mine near Banff on Castle Mountain, known as the Anthracite Mine.³⁷ He continued to be a leader in the Calgary social scene, and was president of the Dramatic and Musical Club.³⁸

Stewart died young, at the age of 39, leaving at least two children. During the Christmas holidays he had remained in the house one Friday, apparently not feeling well. Between 6 and 7 o'clock, he called for his wife Isabel, and spoke his final words. "*Bell, you have been a good wife and mother,*"³⁹ and slipped into unconsciousness, expiring about two hours later. After a short service in Calgary the next day, the body was shipped back to Ottawa for burial. The commander of the Rocky Mountain Rangers made his last march.

In Closing

Major John Stewart's dream of a southern Alberta militia languished until the outbreak of the Boer War in South Africa in 1899. In 1901, the Rocky Mountain Rangers Adjutant, Duncan Campbell organized H Company of the Canadian Mounted Rifles at Fort Macleod. Other companies were to be formed at Calgary, Medicine Hat, Regina and Maple Creek. Campbell was to be the commanding officer, but lost the commission due to political interference from a man named Colin Genge, who replaced Campbell as Captain. The interference led to H Company being disbanded, and no action was seen by Campbell's unit.

In 1905, the unit was reformed as a squad of the 15th Light Horse in Calgary. A year later, the 15th was reformed as the Alberta Rangers and in 1908, became the 23rd Alberta Rangers. In 1911, Squadron headquarters was moved to Pincher Creek, then back to Macleod and finally to Magrath. During World War I, recruits from southern Alberta joined the 13th Canadian Mounted Rifles, Lord Strathcona's Horse and the 191st Battalion, which included about 40 Blood Indians. In 1932 the Southern Alberta Light Horse was raised at Pincher Creek, and is now the Southern Alberta Light Horse based in Calgary.

Fortunately the name of the Rocky Mountain Rangers still remains. In 1908, six independent local militias from Vernon, Rossland, Nelson, Kamloops, and Revelstoke, B.C., were amalgamated and in 1909 were designated as the 102nd Rocky Mountain Rangers, now based in Kamloops.

The 102nd Rocky Mountain Rangers served in World War I, and guarded the homefront on the country's railway bridges, important for the movement of supplies across the nation. They also guarded internment camps of Germans and Austrians in the Kootenays. The 102nd was later sent overseas as part of the 172nd Battalion and received battle honors for Arras, Hill 70, Ypres, Amiens, Valenciennes and the Hindenburg Line.

In the Second World War, the Rangers again performed home defence duties, guarding the railroads. In 1940, the 102nd Rangers were ordered to march a battalion from Kamloops overland to Vancouver, during the hottest time of the year, to determine whether troops could be moved to the coast through the interior, should need arise. They were called into active service in 1943 as part of a joint Canadian-American brigade that was to free Attu and Kiska Islands, off the coast of Alaska, from Japanese control. Upon landing in the Aleutians it

was learned that most of the Japanese forces had withdrawn under cover of fog. Those remaining were captured or committed suicide.

The modern Rangers have also served in United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Korea, the Belgian Congo, and the Middle East. As part of the UN Forces, the 102nd Rocky Mountain Rangers were honored when peacekeepers were awarded the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Rocky Mountain Rangers of 1885 gained little of the glory associated with other militia units of the North West Rebellion, and are all but forgotten by modern historians. But their significance cannot be ignored, for they added a colourful presence to southern Alberta history. The *Lethbridge Herald's* 1935 Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Riel Rebellion stated.

They were western men most of them, good shots, could drink out of their hats if necessary, or sleep under a saddle blanket, and were mobile and effective in the event of having to conduct an Indian campaign.

Essentially, the preceding statement sums up the expectation of a military unit in wartime, although the words hint more to the frontier cowboy life skills that the Rangers possessed. When the name of the Rocky Mountain Rangers comes up among enthusiasts of the Riel Rebellion era, the statement usually contains something to the effect that the Rangers really never did anything. This opinion is not correct. When taken in the context of the times and the conditions that prevailed, the mere presence of the Rangers contributed to the maintenance of peace in the vast ranche country of 1885. Communities were guarded, rumors were quashed, property was protected, and many, many man-hours were spent in the saddle in the name of peace and order. How could this type of duty be conceived of as doing nothing?

The Rebellion was an age of heroes and battles, and Stewart's hastily organized band of 'Cowboy Cavalry' did not receive any glory for garrison and patrol duty beyond the gratitude of the citizens of southern Alberta. Even the Rangers themselves have not left behind much of a storehouse of information of their wartime experiences, perhaps not considering their service as anything unusual. One must remember that the time frame examined is only a few short months in the careers of individuals who lived their own very full lives, in the midst of a very exciting era.

Many of these Rangers helped to build southern Alberta. People like the Rangers, the North West Mounted Police, and the native Indians of the Blackfoot Confederacy have done much to prove that this land was much more than a barren desert. Their experiences as soldiers, hunters, patrolmen and ranche hands made the land safe for settlement, without the bloodshed usually associated with the American westward movement. Maybe the Rangers didn't do much fighting in the rebellion, but they make up a part of our western traditions, in an era referred to by Americans as "the Wild West"

In fact, the Rocky Mountain Rangers' duties during the course of the Rebellion were a lot like their modern day counterparts in trouble spots around the world. They were a true peacekeeping force, and like their NWMP allies, they walked a fine line between two cultures that of the vanishing native Indian society and the white settler, each of whom at the time was in a state of radical transition. They suffered a lack of glory, but they contributed greatly to the rich heritage and lore of a very fascinating period in Canadian history

Appendix A

Roster of the 1885 Rocky Mountain Rangers

(Original source: *Reminiscences of the Northwest Rebellion* by Charles Boulton, 1886;
Modified in 1994 by Gordon E. Tolton)

No. 1 Troop			No. 2 Troop			No. 3 Troop		
Active Service Corps			Active Service Corps			(formerly Pincher Creek Home Guard)		
Major John O. Stewart			Captain Edward Gilpin Brown			Captain John (Honest John) Herron		
Captain Lord Richard Boyle			(NWMP)			(NWMP)		
Lieutenant James R. Scott			Lieutenant William F. Powell			Lieutenant George Canning Ives		
2nd Lieutenant Hon. Henry Boyle			Lieutenant James Christie			(NWMP)		
Sergeant-Major William H. Heath			Sergeants			Lieutenant Charles (Jughandle) Smith		
Sergeants			Fred Mountain			Serg-Major James B. Brennan		
George H. P. Austin			William McCord			Regt. #1		
William Jackson			Alexander Gordon			Sergeants		
Howard Lovejoy			Corporals			James H. Schofield (NWMP)		
Montague Adamson			Benjamin McCord			Albert A. McCullogh		
Corporal Charles Kinlock			David Joseph Wylie			Charles G. Geddes		
Anson Ely			William D. Armstrong			Corporals		
Frank Fisher			Troopers			Frank LeVasseur		
Scouts			George Welch			Harold J. Smith		
John George Brown (Kootenai Brown)			John W. Little			Samuel Leper		
Aaron A. Vice			Joseph Simmons			Troopers -		
John M. Robson (Rattlesnake Jack)			James Simmons			Alfred H. Lynch-Staunton (NWMP)		
Troopers			Albert Martin			Charles Kettles (NWMP)		
Henry B. Robson			Henry Hall			Albert Milton Morden		
Timothy Quirk			Frederick S. Elliot			Henry Ernest Hyde		
James Wheatley			Joseph P. Purviance			Arthur Edgar Cox		
Albert D. Holbrook			Arthur Gray			Thomas Cyr		
Albert W. Robson			Arthur (Baldy) Morris			Thomas Hinton		
Charles Thornton			James T. Routledge			John Henry Gresham Bray (NWMP)		
John Morgan			"Lord" Lionel Brooke			William Cox Allen		
George Lewis			Alfred F. Willis			Samuel James Sharpe (NWMP)		
George A. Mercier			Edward Larkin (NWMP)			Charles E. Harris		
Charles Wachter			James F. Stock (Alberta Jim)			Adolph Cyr		
Charles Bowen			Edward Neale Barker			Albert Connelly		
William Allen Hamilton (Old Arkie)			George W. Hall			Thomas B. Watson		
			James Collins			Peter McEwen (NWMP)		
Frederick Charles Inderwick			Malcolm McNaught			William Carruthers (NWMP)		
James W. Carruthers			Thomas E. Dawson			William Reid (NWMP)		
Arthur Stafford			William Edmonds			Maxine (Maxie) Broulette		
John Rogers Davis			Frank Fontien			William R. Lees		
Peter C. Parker			Frank Fetch (Fitch ?)			Ernest Hausen		
Edward Hasson			Charles Langland			John Brown		
Edward Gallagher			Frederick T. Young			Frederick Delkinton		
Albert E. Kertcher			Henry Haymes			Leslie Grey Willock		
Alex W. McBride			William Chute			Daniel Wannamaugher		
Charles Hildreth						Eugene Chamberlain		
Richard Powers								
William J. Patterson								
George Holt								
Adjutant Duncan John D'Urban								
Campbell								
Surgeon Leverett George De Veber								
(NWMP)								
						Rangers who are shown on pay list, but not listed in Boulton.		
						Joseph A. Grant (??)		
						Norris (??)		

Disposition of troops in the North West Field Force during 1885 Rebellion

BATOCHE COLUMN AND REGION (Saskatchewan):

Staff

Commander Major-General Frederick D. Middleton
Chief Of Staff Lord Melgund
Artillery Commander Lieutenant-Colonel Charles E. Montezambert,
Royal Canadian Artillery
Infantry Commander Lieutenant-Colonel Bowen W.S. van Straubenzie
Staff, Royal Military College
Deputy Adjutant-General Lieutenant-Colonel Charles F. Houghton
Acting Quarter Master General Captain Herbert de H. Haig,
Royal Engineers
Chief Transport Officer Samuel L. Bedson

A Battery, Regiment of Canadian Artillery (Quebec City)
Winnipeg Field Battery of Artillery (Winnipeg)
Boulton's Mounted Infantry (Russell & Birtle, Man.)
Dominion Land Surveyor's Intelligence Corps (Ottawa)
Half of C Company Infantry School Corps (Toronto)
10th Battalion, Royal Grenadiers (Toronto)
90th Battalion, Winnipeg Rifles (Winnipeg)
French's Scouts (Qu'Appelle)
Midland Battalion (Belleville, Lindsay Port Hope & Kingston)
1 Gatling Gun Lieutenant Arthur L. Howard

Touchwood (Assiniboia):

Quebec Cavalry School Corps
Winnipeg Troop of Cavalry (Winnipeg)
York and Simcoe Rangers (central Ontario)

Humboldt (Saskatchewan):

Governor-General's Body Guard (Ottawa)

Prince Albert (Saskatchewan):

North-West Mounted Police
Prince Albert Volunteers

Saskatoon (Saskatchewan):

Saskatoon Infantry Company

Yorkton (Assiniboia):

Yorkton Infantry Corps

Carrot River (Saskatchewan):

Carrot River Home Guards

Fort Qu Appelle (Assiniboia):

91st Battalion, Winnipeg Rifles (Winnipeg)

Qu'Appelle (Assiniboia):

Qu'Appelle Home Guards

BATTLEFORD COLUMN AND REGION (Saskatchewan):

Staff

Commander Lieutenant-Colonel William D. Otter, Q.O.R.
Chief of Staff Superintendent W.M. Herchmer, N.W.M.P.
Brigade Major Lieutenant J.W. Sears, C Company I. S. Corps
Brigade Quarter-Master Captain George W. Mutton, Q.O.R.
Brigade Transport Officer George B. Murphy

Units

B Battery Regiment Of Canadian Artillery (Kingston)
+ oc C Company, Infantry School Corps (Toronto)
Queen's Own Rifles (Toronto)
Governor-General's Foot Guards (Ottawa)
North-West Mounted Police
Battleford Rifles
Battleford Home Guards
1 Gatling Gun

ALBERTA FIELD FORCE:

Staff

Commander Major-General Thomas B. Strange
Brigade Major Major Clement H. Dale
Asst. Quarter-Master General Captain Edward Palliser
Transport and Supply Officer W.J. Hamilton

Units

65th Battalion, Mount Royal Rifles (Montreal)
9th Voltigeurs of Quebec (Quebec)
92nd Battalion, Winnipeg Light Infantry (Winnipeg)
Steele's Scouts (Calgary)
Alberta Mounted Rifles (Calgary)
Edmonton Volunteer Company (Edmonton)
North-West Mounted Police

St. Albert (Alberta):

St. Albert Mounted Rifles

Sturgeon River (Alberta):

Sturgeon River Home Guards

Calgary, Gleichen and Fort Macleod (Alberta):

9th Voltigeurs of Quebec
Calgary Home Guards
North-West Mounted Police
Fort Macleod Home Guards
92nd Battalion, Winnipeg Light Infantry
Rocky Mountain Rangers (southern Alberta)

Pincher Creek (Alberta):

Pincher Creek Home Guards
Rocky Mountain Rangers, Troop #3 (southern Alberta)

High River (Alberta):

High River Home Guards
Stimson's Scouts

Medicine Hat (Assiniboia):

Medicine Hat Home Guards
Rocky Mountain Rangers (southern Alberta)
Halifax Provisional Battalion (Halifax)

Medicine Hat to Fort Macleod:

Rocky Mountain Rangers (southern Alberta)
North-West Mounted Police

ALONG THE C.P.R. AND REGION:

C.P.R. Mainline, Various Locations:

Halifax Provisional Battalion (Halifax)

Wood Mountain (Assiniboia):

Wood Mountain Scouts
North-West Mounted Police

Old Wives Lake to Moose Mountain (Assiniboia):

Moose Mountain Scouts

Maple Creek (Assiniboia):

Maple Creek Home Guards
North-West Mounted Police

Swift Current (Assiniboia):

Half Of Halifax Provisional Battalion (Halifax)
7th Battalion Fusiliers

Regina (Assiniboia):

Regina Home Guards

Grenfell (Assiniboia):

Grenfell Home Guards

Wolsley (Assiniboia):

Wolsley Home Guards

Moosomin (Assiniboia):

Moosomin Home Guards

Shoal Lake (Manitoba):

Shoal Lake Home Guards

Birtle (Manitoba):

Birtle Infantry Company

Minnedosa (Manitoba):

Minnedosa Home Guards

Brandon (Manitoba):

Brandon Home Guards

Gladstone (Manitoba):

Gladstone Home Guards

Griswold (Manitoba):

Griswold Home Guards

Rapid City (Manitoba):

Rapid City Home Guards

Winnipeg (Manitoba):

Winnipeg Home Guards
Kildonan Home Guards

Emerson (Manitoba):

Emerson Home Guards

Rat Portage, Dist. Of Keewatin (Kenora, Ontario):

Rat Portage Home Guards

HEADQUARTERS AT WINNIPEG

Principal Supply Officer & Paymaster Lt.-Col. W.H. Jackson
Chief Transport Officer - Lt.-Col. E. A. Whitehead
Paymaster Major G. Guy

HEADQUARTERS AT SWIFT CURRENT

Lines of Communication Major General P.G. Laurie
Deputy Surgeon-General T.G. Roddick, M.D.
Purveyor General Hon. M. Sullivan, M.D.

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6. Telegram, Stewart To D. Campbell, April 29, 1885.
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